

*Art. Honegger, Pauline, Milhaud conté
277 Madrigals*

disques

SEPTEMBER
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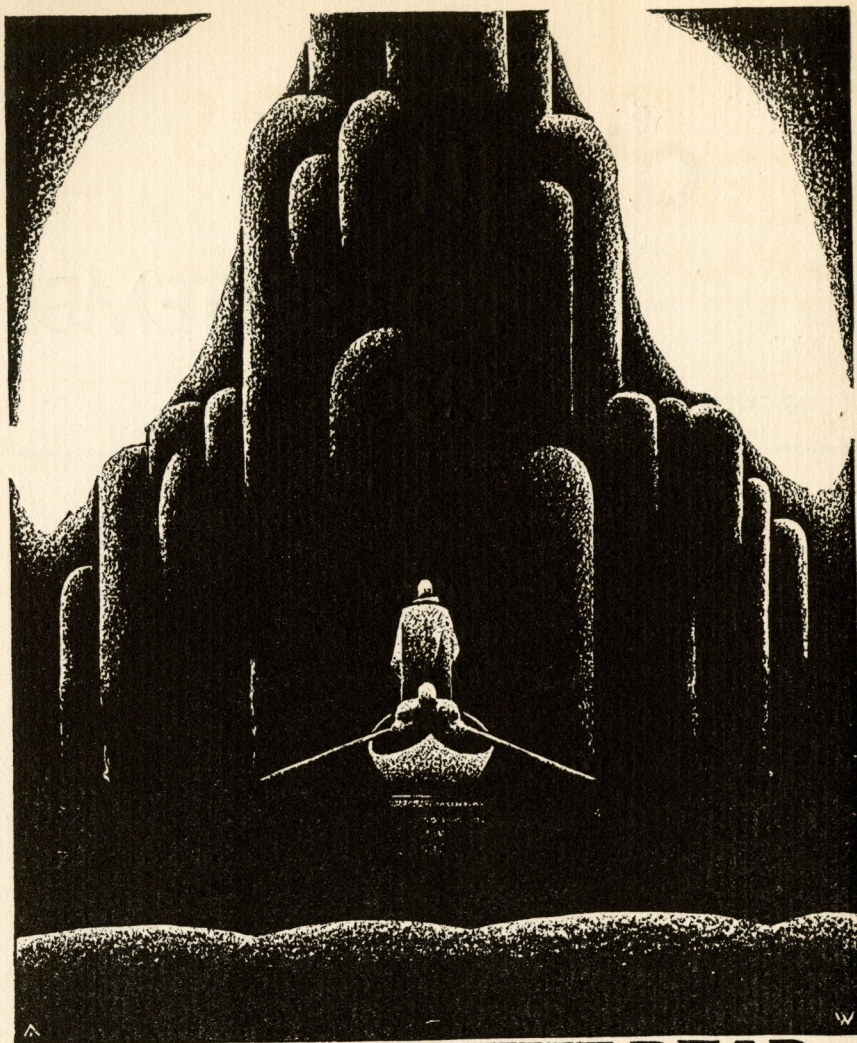
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FOR SEPTEMBER 1930

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THE ISLE OF THE DEAD

An interpretation of Rachmaninoff's sombre tone poem drawn for *Disques* by Arthur Wallower.

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disques

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Vol. I

SEPTEMBER, 1930

No. 7

AT LAST music seems likely to take its place with the other arts in the curriculum of our foremost educational institutions. It is rumored that several representative American colleges will require all applicants to pass an examination in musical history and appreciation. In view of this, the various preparatory schools are arranging compulsory courses in musical history instead of the heretofore haphazard optional ones. Comprehensive music libraries containing both records and scores will be available for the use of the students. We feel that it is a splendid idea to include scores, for certainly there is no better way to the appreciation of a composition than by following the recording with the score. It is quite a simple matter, too. Nearly anyone can do it with a little practice, for technical knowledge of music is not necessary. It is certainly worth the effort—to see and hear music simultaneously is the ultimate in musical satisfaction.



Perhaps it may seem strange, that the history and appreciation of such an important art should have been so generally neglected in our schools of higher education. It is not so strange though, when we consider the diffi-

culty of developing the students' appreciation of, let us say, a Beethoven symphony or a Wagnerian opera, with only the score and the available piano upon which to illustrate it. Only such a meagre idea could have been conveyed that it is, perhaps, just as well that the course was omitted entirely. Now, with the excellent recordings of nearly all of the great masterpieces, it is a very easy matter to present the subject in a most interesting and adequate manner. The old idea that it was necessary to be able to write or perform music in order to appreciate it persisted for so many years that it was doubtless thought useless to attempt to develop an interest in music in those who were not studying it technically. How such an idea could have gained almost universal credence is indeed hard to understand; they certainly did not think that it was necessary to be an actor to appreciate a fine play, yet they seemed to think that it was necessary to be a musician to appreciate a symphony.



The great value of music from an educational standpoint is becoming better understood every day and we believe that it will only be a matter of a few years when every college

graduate will have at least the foundation for a fine appreciation of this art. Very likely, we will find that he is just as familiar with the great names in music as he is with the great names in literature. Music will be just as much a part of his life, and just as necessary to the enjoyment of it, as books.

We are entering a new era in the cultural life of America and the phonograph and the little black discs will play a very important part in the educational life of our country, they have a very real place, the importance of which is just now beginning to be realized.

The death of Siegfried Wagner at Bayreuth on August 4th, just four months after the passing of his mother, Cosima Wagner, removes one more important link connecting the present age with that of Richard Wagner. Siegfried was active both as a conductor and as a composer, but it will probably be his work at Bayreuth, where he had complete charge after his mother relinquished control, that will be remembered more than anything else. A number of records of his father's works made under his direction are available.

Our frontispiece this month is contributed by Mr. Arthur Wallower, one of Philadelphia's younger artists, who, by the way, is an enthusiastic record collector.

Three well-known European conductors, whose work is familiar to record collectors through their recording activities, have been engaged to direct two of America's great symphony orchestras next season. Erich Kleiber, general musical director of the Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Berlin, since 1923, will conduct the six opening weeks of the season of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. Kleiber has made numerous records for H. M. V. and Polydor. Readers of *Disques* will recall in particular his recent H. M. V. recording of Mozart's *Prague Symphony* with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and his Polydor recording of Beethoven's *Second Symphony* with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra. Issai Dobrowen, conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic in Norway, and Basil Cameron, musical director at Hastings, England, will share the conductorship of the San Francisco Symphony. Dobrowen was the conductor of an excellent set of the *Norwegian Dances* of Grieg, issued lately by Odeon, and Cameron, it will be recalled, conducted the Dvorák *Fourth Symphony* for Brunswick.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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CODE

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer and all records are domestic releases unless the word **IMPORTED** appears directly under the number: B-Brunswick, C-Columbia, EB-Edison-Bell, FO-Fonotopia, G-National Gramophonic Society, HO-Homocord, O-Odeon, PA-Parlophon, PD-Polydor, R-Regal (English), and V-Victor.

Another Rachmaninoff Album

T. V. NEPRAVNIK

The Isle of the Dead. Five sides and *Vocalise*. One side. Both played by the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Sergei Rachmaninoff. Three 12-inch discs (V-7219 to V-7221; Victor Set M-75) in an album. Price, \$6.50. Miniature Score: A. Gutheil, Moscow.

It was just about this time two years ago when the Rachmaninoff *Second Symphony*, played by the Cleveland Orchestra under Sokoloff and issued by Brunswick, appeared in the dealers' shops. An attractive and arresting set of records, it not only represented the finest recording achievement of the Cleveland band, but it also marked the first outstanding Rachmaninoff composition to be electrically recorded. A year later a second important Rachmaninoff set appeared, creating an equal amount of excitement. With the composer himself at the piano and Stokowski conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra, the *Second Concerto* for piano and orchestra was released by Victor, replacing the cut acoustical set. For some obscure and probably not very important reason, the recording companies seem to consider the end of the Summer to be the appropriate time to turn their attention to the Russian-American pianist and composer. For now Victor issues a third Rachmaninoff album: *Die Todteninsel, Symphonische Dichtung zum Gemälde von A. Böcklin* or, as it is more familiarly known, *The Isle of the Dead*.

Rachmaninoff presents a curious and baffling figure to the contemporary musical world. He used to be known principally as a composer. Now one hears of him everywhere as a magnificent pianist. But he is rarely spoken of as a creative musician. Why has he almost entirely abandoned composing? His own reason, advanced in an interview, isn't altogether convincing. "Nowadays," he said, "I have little time for composition. I am a performer; it is the will of fate. But I do not worry. At the end of every season I can enjoy a little while all to myself. At such times awake the old dreams and the old longings, and then sometimes I give myself up to composition." This is a pretty explanation. But it is a bit too facile for entire plausibility. The fact that he is a performer, that he is, indeed, a marvelously gifted pianist—this would hardly be enough to keep him from composing if the urge were sufficiently compelling. One does not like to believe that the composer of such fine and sincere pages as are in the *Second Symphony* actually prefers playing his *Prelude in C Sharp Minor* for audiences that clamor to hear it again and yet again to writing salient and enduring music.

The reason probably lies in the fact that he is a greater pianist than he is a composer—or, at all events, that it is as a pianist that the public most esteems him. Music has changed, not necessarily for the better, since Rachmaninoff first started writing. He hasn't kept pace with the new developments. His works belong to the period made glamorous by Tchaikowsky, Rimsky-Korsakow and Borodin. Audiences that listen solemnly to Strawinsky and are profoundly impressed with his engaging theories naturally find Rachmaninoff's work old-fashioned. One can scarcely blame Rachmaninoff for not concentrating on his creative gifts. They would not be appreciated if he did. Having nothing to say to the Atonalists and their colleagues, he prefers silence to making a noisy and incoherent fuss in order to convince the more impressionable of the musical public that he has new and enchanting things to offer. Rachmaninoff is not the sort of musician who seeks to cover up a paucity of ideas by all sorts of experiments.

He has, however, written some memorable works, and it is an excellent thing that several of them have been recorded. *The Isle of the Dead* contains some of his most eloquent pages. It is well-made, and it says something; and it therefore deserves a hearing. It bears the sub-title: "To the Picture by A. Böcklin." Böcklin's famous canvas must by this time be familiar to nearly everyone. It may be seen in almost any printshop, and a well-known piano concern frequently uses it in its magazine advertisements. The picture, which was suggested by an island in the group of Ponza Islands north of the Gulf of Naples, is a masterpiece of unrelieved gloom. The severe cliffs and cheerless cypress trees of the dreary, desolate island, the mysterious boat with its strange cargo approaching the harbor—all this creates an effect of depressing loneliness and forbidding isolation.

A phrase for harp, accompanied by 'cellos, double-basses and kettledrums in 5-8 time, is heard at the beginning, definitely establishing the atrabilious mood of the picture. A figure for the 'cellos, suggesting, some say, the lapping of the waters surrounding the island, begins at the fifth measure. This important figure is heard, either as the motive or as an accompaniment, throughout the work. A motive for the horn and divided first violins leads to a passage in which four first violins play a theme of mournful beauty, while the other first violins, muted, play the figure heard at the beginning. The theme is passed on to the woodwind; the music grows more agitated; and then the 'cellos, and later the brass, suggest the plain-song *Dies Irae*. A climax is reached, and the second section begins, the chief theme of which is given to the violins, flute and clarinet. After a passage for oboes, English horn and strings with a syncopated accompaniment for clarinets, bassoons and double-basses, the principal climax of the piece is achieved. There is another hint of the *Dies Irae*, a brief solo is given to the first violin, and the music gradually sinks to a quiet ending. Lawrence Gilman, in what is perhaps the most illuminating description of this music that has yet been written, has said: "He (Rachmaninoff) has enlarged upon its text, though he has told us nothing which was not contained in it. He has said more than Böcklin has said, but nothing that Böcklin did not imply. His subject gave him neither opportunity nor excuse for saying anything in a different key. Böcklin's vision is a fundamentally despondent, a fundamentally unilluminated one. The musician could not justifiably impose a different hue upon it. There is no elevation in the music; but there is none in the picture."

The Isle of the Dead was first played at Moscow in the season of 1908-09 under the direction of the composer. The first performance in the United States was at Chicago, December 3, 1909, by the Theodore Thomas Orchestra conducted by Rachmaninoff. The work is dedicated to Nicolas von Struve. It is scored for the following orchestra: three flutes (one interchangeable with piccolo), two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, double-bassoon, six horns, three trumpets, three trombones, bass tuba, a set of three kettledrums, bass drum, cymbals, harp and strings.

Played by the Philadelphia Orchestra with the composer conducting, the album marks the first appearance of this organization on records with a conductor other than Stokowski. Rachmaninoff's interpretation is a vivid and sensitive one. He is an able conductor, having been for some years the director of the orchestra at the Imperial Theatre, Moscow. *Vocalise*, which completes the set, is a lovely little piece, showing off to excellent advantage the peculiar beauty of the Philadelphia Orchestra's strings. As for the recording, it does ample justice to Rachmaninoff's bleak tone poem.

Honegger, Poulenc & Milhaud

RICHARD GILBERT

6. Milhaud: *Operas-Minutes—Orestie d'Eschyle*

And now we come to some of Milhaud's most recent creations: the unique "opéras-minutes." They are three little one act chamber operas, each lasting about eight minutes. Henri Hoppenot supplied the libretti, taken from Greek mythological sources, written in the manner of Greek tragedy, and supplying charming subject matter for equally delicious music. It is difficult to choose a favorite among them. Each little opera is built up, musically, on a series of short highly condensed forms. Sometimes the harmonies turn acidulous and the rhythms become oddly accented, the music becomes brusque and truculent; yet, in other spots, where the harmony is not so biting, the music is quite savory and should please more conventional ears. All three works, throughout, are characterized by a fine melodic invention and superb orchestration. Milhaud demonstrates vividly the effects that can be derived from the small chamber orchestra and adds to this a proficiency in choral writing. The comments of the chorus, in pure Greek fashion, form some of the most agreeable music in the short works. The operas have not been performed in America and these gramophone records may be said to be the "premier" performance here.

Here is something of the story of each: At the beginning of *L'Abandon d'Ariane* the chorus of shipwrecked sailors comment on the plights of Ariadne, who deplores the love of Theseus and of Phaedra, who, deprived of his caresses, prays for his love. Ariadne and Phaedra, of the same figure and wearing costumes exactly alike, enter. Ariadne sings: "O Father! O just Ninos! your daughter, the object of your tenderness, shipwrecked on the beach of Naxos, suffers the vulgar husband that you have given her." The chorus of gypsies intone: "O tragic spectacle! O unfortunate woman! Dionysus, Dionysus look down upon her!" While Phaedra replies: "The torment which tortures you, my sister, would make me happy. The cruel indifference of our husband pierces my heart. I adore him! He scorns me! And you repel his fires of love: heart rending and double indignity the gods have heaped upon us." The chorus repeat: "A tragic spectacle! O victims of Eros!—O unfortunate sisters! Dionysus! Dionysus! Consider O Powerful One, their sad destinies!" Dionysus, disguised as an old beggar, heretofore surrounded by the chorus of gypsies, advances a few steps toward the center of the scene and extends his hand: "Have pity, O passersby, of an unhappy man deprived of the light of day—and help him!" Ariadne, not recognizing Dionysus, gives him a mite; Phaedra does likewise. Theseus is seen approaching. Ariadne flees while the distressed Phaedra rejoices. Theseus calls after Ariadne, ignoring the advances of her sister. He asks of Ariadne from Dionysus, who pours a drink of the precious wine "for the Hero of Greece." Theseus rejoices: "By the beard of the Gods, by Neptune with a cold, and by thundering Jupiter! This wine is excellent and I want to drink more!" Dionysus fills the cup once again; at the same time he makes a sign to Phaedra, who is standing half hidden in a ravine in the rocks, to lower her veil over her face and to come forward. Theseus, perceiving Phaedra, who is completely covered with her veil, exclaims: "So, here you are, ladies, none too soon, I must say! Phaedre, Ariadne, my wives! Let us hasten toward our boat!" The chorus of navigators chant: "O old man! Your wine troubles him! He is drunk of it! He sees double! Drunk of a trickster philtre, he believes he is talking to the two sisters!" Theseus goes off staggering. He

seems to direct before him two women in place of one: "Pass that way, adored Ariadne! Follow here, Phaedra unfavored! Our sails are already prepared, and we are going to leave this isle of misfortune." They both go out. Dionysus turns toward Ariadne, who has hidden herself, and calls: "Step forward without fear! From now on he takes with him, whether he wills it or not, Phaedre, the only queen of his heart." "Unhoped for joy! O ravishing happiness! Here I am freed of this big fighter! Already his vessels are outward bound from Naxos . . . But then who are you, prodigious old man?" rejoices and queries Ariadne. The chorus of gypsies sing: "Dionysus! Dionysus!" They divest themselves, as Dionysus also does, of their rags and they appear clothed in shimmering white. Dionysus has turned into a splendid, radiant young man: "Your mite was placed in the powerful hand of a god. You were rewarded for it, both of you! But what else can I do for you, noble Ariadne?" "Make me one of Diana's companions, kind god, wandering from evening 'til dawn in the skies," requests Ariadne. Dionysus grants her wish and, with her, climbs the large rocks backstage; when they reach the summit, night has almost fallen; electric lights, forming the "constellation d'Ariane," light up in a crown around Ariadne's head and hang on cords from her hands. Both choruses sing: "In the golden flank of the clouds, in the chorus of pure stars, she emerges glorious from the depths of the azure. And sailors on their ship, Magi of distant empires, travelers and lovers will see the daughter of Minos and of Pasiphaë eternally shining on the great starry vault of the heavens!"

The music to *L'Abandon d'Ariane* is extremely melodious and lyric in character. Euphonious devices in orchestra rhetoric are introduced with amazing ingenuity; the instruments emphasize in irresistible and individual terms the meaning of the words.

La Délivrance de Thésée is based on a well-known myth. Phaedra, the step-mother of Hippolytus, makes love to him while her husband, Theseus, is away at the wars. However, Hippolytus, being enamoured of Aricina, spurns her advances. Phaedra, with revenge, decries her stepson before Theseus, who immediately wills that a sea monster seize him. Then Theseus, with an eye for his ward, Aricina, gives her a glowing account of his exploits against the Scythians. A chorus, in the background, begins mourning for the death of Hippolytus. Theramenes enters to avenge his friend and, drawing his sword, strikes Phaedra, who dies. The chorus of distant voices continue their murmuring while Theseus and Aricina console one another.

L'Enlèvement d'Europe, a work of great beauty, deals with the myth of Europa and the Bull. The minute-opera opens with the chorus of soldiers and workmen commenting upon Europa's refusal of the hand of Pergamum, to whom she has been betrothed. Her father has forced but has not dominated her; Pergamum, the unconquerable, is conquered! Pergamum and Agenor enter: "It is too much! your majesty! your daughter prefers the pleasures of a cow-herd to the love of a hero. Ceaselessly she flees amongst the herds. And gives her caresses to the cows and the calves. And yesterday I trembled with rage at seeing her embrace the back and entwine the neck of an Andalusian bull." Agenor replies: "Girls are very singular; Europa has never shown much liking for exploits of military persons, and prefers, in fact, the long roarings of this red animal to war-stories. But here she is, coming with him. Let's hide ourselves." The chorus, commenting as usual: "They look at each other tenderly. What can she understand in all these mooings?" Europa and the Bull appear. Jupiter, the Bull, exclaims: "Love which changes humans into beasts does not even spare Jupiter, the Highest. And in order to approach you I have donned the head and characteristics of the bull. A hundred

of your father's young cows come daily to drive me mad, but you alone ravish the senses of the Master of Thunder. I am worn out from a vain wait. I am yours: be mine and yield without delay to this double ardor of the bull in my body and that of the god in my heart!" Then the chorus: "Moo! Moo! Moo! Listen to the absurd and senseless prattle! Moo! Moo!" Europa answers, while the chorus continue with their mocking: "Tonight I will come towards the pasture where in the moonlight your brown horns shine. Divine beast, yes! I adore you!" The chorus understand none of it. Pergamum enters, pushing back Agenor, shouting: "Don't hold me! My outraged honor demands a prompt revenge. O anger! O suffering! Bend the bow and guide the justice dealing arrow!" He goes out, while the chorus, leaning forward, with their eyes follow the drama hidden from the audience: "Ah! the crazy one! The senseless one! He spares the girl and threatens the god! The bull is shot to death! He has drawn the cord and the arrow flies! No! He leaps up! He holds himself erect and shakes himself! The arrow is torn from his neck! It throws itself in the air and flies! O prodigious happening! Pergamum, Pergamum, it strikes you in the heart." Pergamum re-enters. His remarks here include a witticism, the significance of which we fail utterly to get: "C'est la parade espagnole!" (It is the Spanish parade!) Well! Anyway, he dies. Agenor calls: "Europa, unnatural child! What misfortunes you have caused!" The chorus replies: "You call her in vain. On the sacred back her body in abandonment reposes! And the bull bounds toward the sea . . . he gallops . . . he plunges in the sounding waves! And Jupiter raises Europa towards the cradle of the Minotaur!"

The final scene of *L'Enlèvement d'Europa* is one of the most personal and sensuously beautiful passages from the pen of Milhaud. The three works were written in 1927. They are given performances here by the *Pro Musica Society* of Paris under the personal direction of the composer. The reproduction could hardly be better. All the parts are well balanced and the interpretation, to be considered authentic, is always under control.

For great resemblance to original sonority there is no better example, in all recorded music, than that of the reproduction of the excerpts from *L'Orestie d'Eschyle* (text by Paul Claudel), on French Columbia records C-D15242 and C-D15243. *Les Choéphores* is represented by *Vocifération funèbre*, in two parts, and *Exhortation et Conclusion*; *Les Euménides* finds representation by a *Processional*. These two discs contain some of the most beautiful, the most strident and individual music that Milhaud has yet written. The score of this work is unavailable in America, if it is published. A bibliography of Milhaud's published works does not include it and American agents of Milhaud's publishers do not report it among works listed in their current catalogues. However, careful listening to the records, from the standpoint of appreciating pure sonority and thematic content, reveals a sensitive feeling and remarkable dynamic treatment of chorus and orchestra. The former is superb; no less thrilling is the solo work of Milles. Van Hertbruggen and Van Steenbergen and Mme. Croiza. The *Exhortation* is a magnificent piece of ultra-dramatic declamation by Croiza; she is accompanied by the curious instrumentation of stage noises, referred to in the previous instalment, and a chorus all alive with the musical implications of the text. Milhaud's orchestration of percussion instruments has great and daring rhythmic force. From the point of sheer tone color alone this section is highly interesting. The performance is under the noteworthy direction of M. Louis de Vocht, who will be remembered for his fine *Judith* discs.

Discussing Milhaud's music, Aaron Copland remarks: "Milhaud is a good example of the modern composer who suffers from the inevitable superficiality of most of our professional criticism and public opinion regarding new music, based as it is on a single and often imperfect performance of a new work. It is true that new works demand more than a single hearing. But it is no less true that the personality of a new and worthwhile composer is no different from the personality of a new and worthwhile acquaintance; they both impose upon us the necessity for longer familiarity than can be obtained in the quick exchange of the concert hall if we are to judge of their significance." Fortunately, this is no longer the case with some of Milhaud's music. Here are embodied, in a re-creative medium, works of a modern composer, skilfully executed and placed permanently in a form from which can be obtained hearings, as often as desired, at the will of the listener. An appreciation of Darius Milhaud's music is no longer incumbent upon the concert hall.

Dr. Frederick Weissmann

RICHARD J. MAGRUDER

A veteran of the phonograph at the age of thirty-seven, Dr. Frederick Weissmann probably knows as much about the art of conducting a symphony orchestra for recording purposes as any conductor now engaged in this kind of work. There are few artists who have more discs to their credit than this energetic young German; and there are equally as few whose recorded works cover such a wide variety of music—music that ranges from the indisputably great to those frankly inferior compositions upon which the gramophone companies rely for best-sellers. Dr. Weissmann must spend a large portion of his life before the microphone. Pot-boilers and masterpieces—these roll out of the Lindström Company (with whom he is under contract to make records for Parlophone and Odeon) at a dizzy pace. These discs, made with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra and that familiar band that rejoices in the impressive title of Grand Symphony Orchestra, occupy a major portion of the foreign Parlophone and Odeon supplements. And in this country they form the main support of the domestic Odeon catalogue.

In such a lengthy list, of course, one would naturally expect many discs of dubious quality. Records of this sort there are in Dr. Weissmann's list—many of them. But the bad ones generally turn out to be bad either because they are early electrical reproductions and hence suffer from mechanical defects, or because the music they present is fourth-rate. The vast majority of Dr. Weissmann's records are fine, spirited, businesslike affairs; they present the music—regardless of its quality—competently and effectively. They may not often rise to great heights, but they rarely sink to the level of mere routine performances.

Dr. Weissmann's style is not intensely individual. It is not easy to find obvious tricks in his conducting by which one can readily identify his records. But there is one valuable quality that stands out saliently in nearly all the records he has made: consistency. His records maintain an even level of excellence. Hard work and careful thought, one feels, went into the making of them. They reveal a sound conception of the music at hand, a vast ingenuity in getting it on the discs properly, and a touch that is light but firm. Dr. Weissmann has been particularly successful in concerto recording. Owners of the Liszt *Concerto No. 2 in A Major* and the Mozart *Violin Concerto No. 5 in A* (K. 219) (Columbia Sets Nos. 99

and 137, respectively) will recall the fine balance that is achieved between the solo instrument and the orchestra. He does not obscure the solo instrument with his orchestra, nor does he become excessively modest and retire too far into the background. His orchestra is not forced upon your attention, but you are always agreeably aware of its presence.

A noted German critic has observed: "The rising generation of young conductors of a firm character is not so large as it has been in the past. It is true that the band leader classes at the high schools show a fairly good attendance, but students leaving such institutions to go out into the world generally struggle in vain to become genuine leaders. Recently I again met Frederick Weissmann. He had arranged for the performance of a symphony by Strauss at the opening festivities of the 'Lindström-Aufnahmerraum.' I could not help but observe how he handled the matter with a quiet certainty and a rhythmical rigidity, how he built up, how marvelous was his shading, and how he seemed to penetrate into the very spirit of the work without noticeable effort—how, in fact, he seemed always to have his orchestra under perfect control. I found that he had developed, in a few short years, into an uncommonly gifted conductor, an expert, indeed, whose further progress bears close watching. I am particularly impressed with the manner with which Weissmann handles Schillings' *Mona Lisa*, the ease with which he solves the difficulties of Pfitzner's scores, and his magnificent reading of Beethoven's *Ninth*. In Weissmann I recognize not only a technically trained conductor, but also an artist whose ear is exceptionally sensitive, a man who considers nothing too small for a sedulous, painstaking interpretation . . . However, what is most important about Frederick Weissmann is the fact that he combines pleasantness of expression and the sense of color and detail with an essential greatness."

Dr. Frederick Weissmann was born in Frankfurt am Main, Prussia, January 23, 1893, the elder of two brothers. His parents are still alive, living in Frankfurt, where his father is precentor. The younger brother, to whom Dr. Weissmann was much attached, was killed in the world war. Ever since he can remember, Dr. Weissmann says, he has been inordinately fond of music. He began to study the piano in his early childhood. His father, though, was not sufficiently impressed with his son's musical gifts to consent to a musical career. The elder Weissmann was fond of music, too, but in its proper place. One has to make a living in this world, and so it was resolved that young Frederick should become a lawyer. Much against his will he was sent to the classical college at Frankfurt, where he became a law student. Then followed courses at the Universities at Grenoble, Geneva and Heidelberg. These studies were finally concluded at Munich, where he studied philosophy, musical history and literature. It was here that he obtained his B. A. degree.

During these years Dr. Weissmann was spending every moment of his spare time studying music. Without money and believing that the law was to be his life work, though, he naturally didn't take it very seriously. It was during his second or third year of university studies that he met an older friend who did not approve of his decision to enter the law. "Considering your unmistakable musical talent," he told Weissmann one day, "it seems a great pity that you want to become a jurist. Some day you will get married. You will have children. You will grow fat and well-to-do. And then you will be buried. A hum-drum, commonplace sort of existence. You will simply be like a million others."

This cheerful news Dr. Weissmann received with some misgivings. He decided to spend more time studying music. His musical education did not cost him a

penny. After his university expenses were paid, there was nothing left over. But he was fortunate enough to find teachers who, recognizing his ability, were glad to instruct a remarkable pupil free of charge. At Frankfurt and Mannheim he was a member of the master class of the pianist, Professor William Rehberger, and later he studied under the late Professor Philipp Wolfrum, the noted contrapuntist and Bach authority. His law studies were neglected, and the mysteries of composition began to occupy his time and attention. When the elder Weissman accidentally discovered that young Frederick was spending more time with his music than with his books, he became, as Dr. Weissmann now explains, "extraordinarily angry with me, and I had to leave home.

"I took this opportunity to take up music definitely as my life's work. To my father's great surprise—and to my own, too—I immediately found an engagement as beginning conductor at the Opera-House in Frankfurt. This led to other engagements; among them were positions as leading conductor at Münster and Königsberg and as 'repeater' at the State Opera in Berlin. In the meantime my father and I had become great friends, and our relations are nowadays the best imaginable." Among the operas Dr. Weissmann conducted with notable success at the State Opera, where it is unusual for so young a man to occupy the conductor's desk, were *Madame Butterfly* and *The Flying Dutchman*.

"Since 1928," he says, "I have been principally interested in a concert career, and it is to that end that I am now working. I conduct the subscription concerts of the Richard Wagner Society in Dresden, where I also conduct the Philharmonic Orchestra. While I am, of course, intensely interested in engagements such as these, I am also profoundly interested in the possibilities of the phonograph. Recording work appeals to me tremendously. I am allowed innumerable rehearsals. I drill my band relentlessly, until I feel absolutely confident that it is ready for an artistic and effective recording. Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, Richard Strauss, Tschai-kowsky, Mahler—these are the composers I most enjoy, and consequently it is their compositions I like best to conduct. Music is not only my life's work; it has also been my help-mate in sorrows. In August it will be only one year since I lost my dearly beloved wife and greatest friend, Meta Seinmeyer. But I think it would be superfluous to tell you anything about the extraordinary success she made in her brief career."

Securely established as one of the most popular of the younger conductors, Dr. Weissmann's reputation—at least in this country—has been built almost entirely upon his phonograph records. He has never appeared in the United States. Yet his name over here is a familiar and respected one among record collectors. His discs have served as incomparable advance publicity. He is very anxious to visit the United States, and if a tour should be arranged, the chances for its success, one feels, remembering the popularity of his records, are extremely good.

In Dr. Weissmann's record library there is one disc which he prizes very highly. It was recorded under peculiar circumstances. "I possess two dogs," he says, "named Gin and Pascha. One day I was conducting a big orchestra at Lindström, where we were making records. For a surprise some friends had brought my dog Pascha out there. Things were going splendidly, when suddenly, in the middle of a piece, Pascha started howling—howling as I had never heard him howl before or since. The tears actually ran down his pathetic little face. We had to stop all work, and the record was ruined—except for me. I still have this disc in which a beautiful composition is suddenly interrupted with the heart-breaking howls of a dog."

A Mediterranean Cruise

RICHARD GILBERT



Escales. (Jacques Ibert.) Four sides. Played by Orchestra des Concerts Straram under the direction of M. Walter Straram. Two 12-inch discs. (C-LFX 17 and C-LFX 18.) Price, \$2.00 each. Miniature Score: Alphonse Zeduc et Cie, Paris.

Previous to the release of the two French Columbia discs containing the scintillating *Escales*, by Jacques Ibert, there was but one work from the comparatively unknown pen of this young French composer recorded: *Le petit ane blanc* (from *Histoires* for piano) played on the H. M. V. disc E492 by Benno Moiseivitch and on the Victor disc 1322 by G. Novaes. The recording of *Escales* will do much by way of introducing Ibert's colorful and picturesque music to America.

Jacques Ibert is a Parisian. He was born in 1890 and, after a childhood not altogether unacquainted with musical matters, entered the Paris Conservatoire classes of Andre Gedalge, the foster-father of all the best musicians of France, from Florent Schmitt and Charles Koechlin down to the most recent, which include the robust and athletic Honegger and the arch-revolutionist, Milhaud. Before the war, Ibert had plenty of opportunity to come in contact with the music and theories of the last mentioned musicians, who later, under the perspicacious leadership of the anomalous Satie, set Paris agog with their biting and dissonant music, full of polytonal theories and renouncements of all conventionalities. Ibert was not in the slightest influenced by his modernistic classmates, and followed his own nose in the direction from which "Les Six" turned away with scorn. He had other ideas and other fountains from which to drink. Ibert was particularly attracted to Debussy and Ravel; like them he was also fascinated by music coming from lands south of France. Impressionism exactly suited his nature and in adapting this mode of expression he was not in any sense behaving slavishly; he is first of all a colorist and he turned, naturally, to the two great masters of color—Debussy and Ravel.

His years of apprenticeship were interrupted by the war. He bade farewell to the allurements of Impressionism and became a sailor and, eventually, an officer in the naval reserves. The war over, Ibert returned to the Conservatoire, this time entering the class of Paul Vidal. The *Prix de Rome* had been suspended since 1915 but, when it was offered for competition again in 1919, Jacques Ibert tried his luck and, with his first attempt at scoring, won the coveted scholarship; proving himself, at the same time, a born orchestrator. Nevertheless, the censors of the Institute and Conservatoire were of the opinion that Ibert as a musician had undoubtedly an abundance of natural gifts, but that he was still deficient in technique, not having had time to receive that boon from the pedantic hands of the

professors, the only ones capable of bestowing it. Ibert paid little attention to this criticism and simply went straight to the public. Music lovers in Paris, once hearing his work, were charmed by it and received the music and its composer well. Much of this, of course, argues that Ibert is not a modernist. By the term *modernist* we understand that kind of musician whose tendencies might be considered anarchial or revolutionary; the sort of lonely artist whose compositions are either over the heads of the public at large or possess a too personal idiom of expression. It is true, Ibert is not such a musician. Rather, he presents to his hearers works in which there is clarity and good quality; having something understandable to say, he states it well.

Escales, meaning "Ports of Call," was one of Ibert's first symphonic compositions after winning the *Prix de Rome*. It was composed during the years 1920-22 and was inspired by a cruise in the Mediterranean. The composer's musical sensibility was touched by three popular tunes heard during the course of the voyage. The first is a calm Italian melody, gently sung by the flute from the second bar; the second is oriental in character, for we are now in Algiers, and is introduced, in the second movement, by the oboe; the third derives its inspiration from a Hispano-Moorish melody and is freely developed, in the last section, in the manner of a Spanish rhapsody. The first movement, not labeled on the record as such but, nevertheless, bearing the evocative names of "Rome-Palermo," has lots of vigor and happy abundance. Debussyan orchestral contrivances are used together with an individual sense of color: the effect, in spots, is quite iridescent. One feels that Ibert is a composer who really thinks orchestrally. Throughout the first movement the flute and the Italian melody are much in evidence, contrasted with moments of heavy scoring. The short second section, "Tunis-Nefta," occupying the last few inches of side two, exploits a reiterated melody of distinctly eastern character over an oriental rhythmic accompaniment played by divided strings and supported by the kettle-drum. The third piece, "Valencia," releases the fireworks. Here is dash and color a-plenty. Instrumental devices such as would seem ingenious for a Ravel occur with splendid effect. The Spanish atmosphere is created with an unrivaled impression. These graphic pictures of a southern European tour, all alive with clever, attractive writing, should delight at once all hearers.

Ibert has written a dramatic work which is considered important by European critics. It has not been given in America. Composed about the same time as *Escales*, the music for *Persée et Andromède* is said to match and reanimate the veiled, simple and curiously modern melancholy of Jules Laforge's tale. The work is still in manuscript. André George describes it as "bright, dreamy and mordant by turns . . . One is agreeably drawn into this wellspring of music which flows its easy course so delightfully. It is true that few will be able to resist the memory of the great Debussy, whose influence the composer by no means denies; but the whole remains virile and individual."

There is a chamber work by Ibert that should do well recorded: the *Deux Movements* for two flutes, clarinet and bassoon. The work has found its place quite often at Parisian concerts and, considering the instruments used, should make a splendid set of realistic records. The little set of piano pieces *Histoires*, from which is taken the recorded *Le petit ane blanc*, contains other delightful bits which "confront the player with all sorts of pleasant little puzzles." Such charming music cannot remain alien to the gramophone for any great length of time. Ibert has written other significant works: *Le Chant de Folie*, for chorus and orchestra; incidental music to the play *Le Jardinier de Samos*, by Charles Vildrac; music for

The Ballade of Reading Gaol (an early work); *Les Recontres*, a ballet; and a late symphonic work entitled *Feerique*. There are also little fragments for flute and piano: *Jeux*, and a *Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra*.

Before closing this abrupt sketch of a composer hardly known in this country, we would like to return to the records of *Escales* long enough to mention the gramophonic début of Walter Straram and the Straram Symphony Orchestra. *Escales* was recorded in the new Théâtre des Champs Elysees. Acoustically, this is one of the finest orchestral reproductions we have yet heard. M. Straram always gives very judiciously chosen programmes which attract a growing and assiduous public to them. Doubtless *Escales* and future recordings (he has also made *L'Après-midi d'un faune*) will draw admirers not only from Paris but from wherever the records are played. An outstanding peculiarity of the Straram concerts is that next to a repertory symphony and a known and established contemporary work, they present each time a first performance, prepared with the utmost care. The performance of this gramophone "premier" befits the tradition; it is a splendid execution and should not be missed by those who welcome superb registrations of equally satisfying interpretations of new and interesting compositions.

Victor Contest Prize Winners

The \$25,000 prize offered in the Victor Symphonic Contest for the one outstanding work in symphonic form by an American composer has just been divided among four American composers, according to an official announcement from the Victor Company. The composers whose works entitled them to the awards are: Robert Russell Bennett, Louis Gruenberg, Ernest Bloch and Aaron Copland. Mr. Bennett received two awards with his *Sights and Sounds* and *Abraham Lincoln*. The other prize winning compositions were: Louis Gruenberg's *Symphony*, Ernest Bloch's *Helvetia* and Aaron Copland's *A Dance Symphony*.

The Victor Symphonic Contest was the second of two contests conducted by the Victor Company for American composers. The first, which was intended to discover the best instrumental work in the popular field, was won by Thomas Griselle's *Two American Sketches* and Rube Bloom's *Song of the Bayou*. The Symphonic Contest closed on May 28, 1929. More than one hundred and fifty manuscripts were submitted. The board of judges who made the awards was composed of: Rudolf Ganz, pianist and conductor; Serge Koussevitzky, conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra; Mme. Olga Samaroff, pianist and critic; Frederick Stock, conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; and Leopold Stokowski, conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Each manuscript was thoroughly examined by the judges, who found the general level of merit exceptionally high. Although the prize was intended for the one outstanding work of an American composer, the judges were given the right to award the prize money to any project devoted to the development of creative music in America. Unanimously agreeing that the five works submitted by the four composers mentioned above were of exceptional, and approximately equal merit, they therefore concluded that it would be fairer to award \$5000 to the work of each composer, thus assuring the winners of at least a year's security and leisure for creative work.

Although recordings of the prize winning works have not as yet been announced, the Victor Company holds the broadcasting and recording rights.



ORCHESTRA

**R. STRAUSS
EICHHEIM**

**V-7259
and
V-7260**

Salomé: *Dance of the Seven Veils*. (R. Strauss.) Three sides and
Japanese Nocturne. (Eichheim.) One side. Both played by the
Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski.
Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.

One of the best of Stokowski's pre-electrical discs was the so-called *Salomé's Dance* from Richard Strauss' opera *Salomé*. It was, in fact, an outstanding, even a thrilling, achievement for the days when collectors were not accustomed to the heady experience of hearing orchestral records bearing even a remote resemblance to a real orchestra. But the band playing *Salomé's Dance* was recognizably a symphony orchestra. Connoisseurs, of course, were enchanted, even as was Herod when the inflammatory *Salomé* began her devastating performance. The disc obtained a wide popularity. So the re-appearance of *Salomé's Dance* on the records, this time with the vastly increased opulence of orchestral color made possible through the electrical process, is not at all surprising. It was due long before this. Some will complain bitterly of the fact that H. M. V. already has an excellent version of this music played by Otto Klemperer and the Berlin State Opera Orchestra (V-EJ276), which could have been utilized by the Victor forces. While it is somewhat saddening to speculate upon the many other fine things the Philadelphians could have recorded instead, still it seems both absurd and futile to waste much time lamenting the duplication. Such a vast quantity of music is being recorded these days that the occasional duplications that inevitably occur are not nearly such tragic events as some collectors would have us believe. At the worst, nothing more serious is involved than the wasting of a few hours' recording time. And more often than not the duplications actually provide either better recordings or at least versions that make possible highly interesting comparisons.

Through the incomparable thaumaturgy of Stokowski's vivid reading and the rare competence displayed by his orchestra, Strauss' music takes on a new life and interest. The recording reaches the same dizzy heights as were attained in the recently issued Overture and Venusburg Music from *Tannhäuser* and Stravinsky's *Le Sacre* . . . The dance takes three sides this time. The fourth contains an exotic and unexpected novelty: Henry Eichheim's *Japanese Nocturne*. The son of a noted violoncellist, Henry Eichheim was born January 3, 1870, at Chicago. He studied with Carl Becker and S. E. Jacobsohn at the Chicago Musical College, winning the first prize for violin playing. After some years of playing with symphony orchestras, he decided in 1911 to devote his entire energies to composition, concert playing, teaching and conducting. In subsequent years he took several trips to Japan and oriental countries, where he made a thorough study of oriental music. The *Japanese Nocturne*, a piece of highly descriptive music, is one of the results of that study. It is based "on motives heard at night in Ikao, Matsushima, Yokohama, and Tokio, played by blind masseurs, with the shrill piping of food-venders, the playing of a koto and the chanting of the prayer by an old man beating a small wooden bell." It is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two bassoons, bass clarinet, four horns, two harps, ancient cymbals, fish-head (a wooden drum used to accompany prayers), twenty violins, six violas, six violoncellos and six double-basses (two tuned down to E flat).

R. J. M.

**MEDELS-
SOHN**

**C-67795D
and
C-67796D**

Midsummer Night's Dream: Overture. Four sides. Played by
Symphony Orchestra conducted by Elie Cohen.
Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.

Miniature Score—Philharmonia No. 16.

DEBUSSY

**B-90066
and
B-90067**

Petite Suite: (a) En bateau; (b) Cortège; (c) Menuet; (d)
Ballet. Four sides. Played by Orchestra de l'Association des
Concerts Lamoureux conducted by M. Albert Wolff.
Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$1.50 each.

MASCAGNI

C-G50238D

Die Rantzau: Overture. One side and
Iris: Dances. One side. Both played by Pietro Mascagni and
Symphony Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

**IPPOLITOV-
IVANOV**

V-36017

Caucasian Sketches: No. 1—In the Mountain Pass; No. 3—In the
Mosque. Two sides. Played by the Victor Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Rosario Bourdon. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

The *Scherzo* from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, probably because it adapts itself so neatly to filling out the odd sides of sets, has been recorded times innumerable. But the *Overture*, despite its palpable merits as effective recording material and its overwhelming popularity in the concert room, has not fared so well. Until now, indeed, there has been only one version available in this country: that by Alfred Hertz and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra (Victor Set M-18). This new version of the *Overture*, recorded in France and re-pressed in this country by Columbia, has not the warmth and delicacy of Hertz' recording. The reading is too stiff, too humorless. Such things as the Bergomask dance and the bray of Bottom lack something that Hertz conveys eloquently. But there are felicities. The four mysterious chords in the woodwind, with which the piece opens, for example, are beautifully played, and if the fairy music in the violins that immediately follows seems lacking in mystery and daintiness, the *pizzicato* notes from the violas have a delightful crispness. The recording is smooth. . . . In selecting Wolff's version of Debussy's *Petite Suite* for local re-pressing, Brunswick could scarcely have made a happier choice. It was discussed on page 216 of the August issue, where the Polydor pressings were reviewed. . . . Mascagni, like Richard Strauss, has an uncanny ability for making his music sound effective on the gramophone. The *Overture*, as it is played and recorded here, is a stirring and enjoyable piece of work. The languorous dances from *Iris*, next to *Cavalleria* Mascagni's most successful work, are much less interesting. . . . Striking effects, clear recording and fine playing mark the two selections from Ippolitov-Ivanov's *Caucasian Sketches*. Ippolitov-Ivanov obtained the material for these sketches during a visit to the Caucasus Mountains.

MEYERBEER

**V-EH305
IMPORTED**

Der Prophet: Quadrille (Schittschuhtanz). One side and
Die Afrikanerin: Vorspiel. One side. Both played by the Berlin
State Opera Orchestra conducted by Leo Blech.
One 12-inch disc. Price \$1.75.

It is only necessary to say that Dr. Blech and the recorders lavish their best efforts upon this music.

**WOLF****C-G50236D**

Italian Serenade. Two sides. Played by Fritz Stiedry and Symphony Orchestra. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

MASSENET**C-2238D**

and

C-2239D

and

C-50237D

Scenes Alsaciennes: (a) Au cabaret; (b) Dimanche matin; (c) Dimanche soir—Alsation Air: Retraite Francaise. Six sides. Played by Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Pierre Chagnon. Two 10-inch discs and one 12-inch disc. Price (10-inch), \$0.75 each; (12-inch), \$1.25.

LIADOV**V-D1811**

and

V-D1812

IMPORTED

Eight Russian Fairy Tales. Three sides and The Musical Box. One side. Both played by London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. Two 12-inch discs. Price, \$2.00 each.

The *Italian Serenade* was reviewed on page 171 of the July issue, when it appeared under the Parlophone label. . . . Brahms once spoke of Massenet's works as being "confectioner's music." Brahms, who was a great admirer of Joachim's orchestral pieces, was by no means an infallible critic, but in this instance he seems to have hit upon a singularly apposite, if not very polite, phrase. Massenet wrote seven orchestral suites, of which the *Scenes Alsaciennes*, dating from 1881, was the last. The work was first played at the Concerts du Châtelet. In the suite, which was suggested by Alphonse Daudet's story, *Alsace, Alsace!*, Massenet planned to make a musical record of youthful impressions. It is pretty, ingenious music, and Chagnon and his orchestra linger lovingly over every banal tune. The recording is of the best we have nowadays.

One of the most popular items that appear on Albert Coates' programs at the Lewisohn Stadium in New York is this orchestral arrangement by Liadov of eight Russian folk-songs. Liadov, together with Balakirev and Liapounov, was requested by the Russian Government to make researches into the folk-songs of the various districts. The *Eight Russian Fairy Tales*, some of the results of these labors, were published in 1906. The work is divided as follows: Religious Song; Christmas Song; Lament; Comic Song; Legend of the Birds; Berceuse; Dance Song; General Dance. When the *Tales* were given at the Lewisohn Stadium, the following annotations on the work, translated by Albert Coates from the Russian notes in Liadov's score, were published in the program books: "(1) A religious song usually sung by children in procession; (2) A song about the Christmas fairies 'Koleda' and 'Maleda,' who appear generally at dawn in a sledge all of gold drawn by six stags; (3) A plaintive village song. Usually the melody is intoned by one solo voice, with the choir joining in and repeating it; (4) To a charming little tune in the woodwind, a gay young peasant dances with a gnat, whose buzzing may be heard in the violins; (5) The simple melody of this 'Legend of the birds' suggests their twitterings and pipings; (6) A lull expressing all the loneliness and desolation of the immense snow plains; (7) A dance song of much gaiety; (8) A village dance and chorus, in which the whole village joins on holidays." The two discs make a charming set, one of the most attractive of the month, and the clear recording brings out the trim playing of the London Symphony superbly. The *Musical Box*, originally a piano piece, is played and recorded with similar proficiency. The first side of the *Russian Fairy Tales* contains Nos. 1, 2 and 4, while 3 and 5 are on the reverse side. This does not interfere with one's enjoyment though, as the order of the numbers is not of importance.

PIZZETTI
V-S10128
 IMPORTED

Pisanella: (a) Prelude Act 3—*Il Castello della Regina spietata*; (b) *La danza dello sparviero*. Two sides. Played by La Scala Orchestra, Milan, under the direction of Mo Ildebrando Pizzetti. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.75.



ZANDONAI
V-S10141
 IMPORTED

Giulietta e Romeo: (a) Act 2—*Il gioco del Torchio*; (b) Act 3—*Cavalcata*. Two sides. Played by La Scala Orchestra, Milan, under the direction of Mo Vincenzo Bellezza. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.75.

Miniature Score—G. Ricordi and Co.

ROSSINI
V-S10161
 IMPORTED

La Cenerentola: Sinfonia. Two sides. Played by La Scala Orchestra, Milan, under the direction of Carlo Sabajno. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.75.

VERDI
V-S10160
 IMPORTED

Nabucco: Sinfonia. Two sides. Played by La Scala Orchestra, Milan, under the direction of Carlo Sabajno. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.75.

PEDROTTI
V-S10168
 IMPORTED

Tutti in Maschera: Sinfonia. Two sides. Played by La Scala Orchestra, Milan, under the direction of Carlo Sabajno. One 12-inch disc. Price, \$1.75.

The Orchestra of La Scala is becoming nearly as industrious as that of the Berlin State Opera so far as recording activities are concerned. This month, in addition to the complete *Pagliacci* set, reviewed under OPERA in this issue, it offers these purely instrumental selections from the works of five outstanding Italian composers, two of them still alive. The recording methods used by the Italian engineers might well be emulated elsewhere. The reproduction, while not of the kind that depends upon sheer weight and volume for its effect, is splendidly clear and firm and eminently realistic.

Ildebrando Pizzetti, the director of the Milan Conservatory, visited America last season, when Toscanini introduced his *Rondo Veneziano* at a Philharmonic-Symphony concert. In 1912, at the request of d'Annunzio, Pizzetti wrote the incidental music for the former's drama, *La Pisanella, o La Morte Profumate* (*The Woman of Pisa, or The Perfumed Death*). Later he arranged five of the eleven symphonic pieces which comprise the score for a Suite, in which form it obtained a far wider popularity. Two numbers from the Suite are given here: The Prelude to Act 3, *Il Castello della Regina spietata* (No. 3 of the Suite) and *La Danza dello Sparviero* (No. 4 of the Suite). Descriptive passages from the play, written by d'Annunzio, preface each of the five movements. There is not space to quote them here, but those sufficiently curious can find them in the program books of the Philadelphia Orchestra for January 11th and 12th, 1924. Inasmuch as Pizzetti himself conducts, the disc may be considered authoritative.

The two excerpts from Zandonai's opera, *Giulietta e Romeo*, have been made into a single composition for symphonic purposes. This symphonic episode was introduced at a concert in the Augusteo, Rome, in 1927; it was given in America for the first time by Bernardino Molinari with the St. Louis Orchestra on January 18th, 1929. Mr. Molinari played the work again last Winter with the Philharmonic-Symphony. Zandonai was born at Sacco (Trentino), in 1883. His operas,



Conchita and *Francesca da Rimini*, have been given in this country. *Giulietta e Romeo* is based on Renaissance sources and not, as would ordinarily be expected, on the tragedy of Shakespeare. The two passages that make up the episode given here are: *Il gioco del Torchio*, from Act II, and *Cavalcata*, which follows without a break. The former represents a lively scene of rejoicing, in which Juliette and the maidens dance about a wine press, passing a lighted torch from one to another until the flame burns out; the latter, which was originally an intermezzo, depicts Romeo's furious ride from Mantua to Verona. Played with warmth and spirit by La Scala Orchestra, this descriptive and highly attractive music makes a very desirable disc. The recording in both instances is beyond reproach.

Rossini's *La Cenerentola* was first given in Rome in 1817. As a comic opera, according to *Grove's*, it ranks with the *Barber of Seville*, though not much is heard of it today. Much of the selection here seems pompous and empty, but now and then an engaging melody, skilfully treated, emerges. "*Nabucco*," says Ernest Newman in his *Stories of the Great Operas*, "was the real beginning of Verdi's career." First given at the Scala on March 9th, 1842, the work made a profound impression upon the Italian people, who were then beginning to tire of the reigning favorites, Bellini and Donizetti. It is vigorous, rather commonplace music. Carlo Pedrotti, 1817-1893, was born at Verona. A master of *opera buffa*, his music is vivacious and bright, as is the present selection. There is a lovely 'cello solo on the first side of the disc.

MOZART

C-DX31

to

C-DX33

IMPORTED

Symphony No. 40 in G Minor (K. 550). Six sides. Played by Bruno Walter and the Berliner Staatskapelle (Berlin State Orchestra). Three 12-inch discs. Price \$2.00 each.

Miniature Score—Philharmonia No. 27.

W. R. Anderson, the admirable critic to the *Gramophone*, begins his review of this symphony thus: "A cheap G minor is not new, but this latest example has the great Walter to conduct it, and that makes a difference." Does Mr. Anderson mean by this that recordings of the G minor are plentiful? If so, one wonders where he finds them. Until this version arrived, we have had to be content with the early electrical recording supplied by Dr. Malcolm Sargent and the Royal Opera Orchestra, Covent Garden, for Victor (V-9116 to V-9118). A casual survey of English catalogues reveals the same dismal condition to have existed in England. It seems strange that this lovely work should have been so long neglected by the companies, for it lends itself conveniently to recording purposes. Adequate recordings of the other two of the three last symphonies, the *Jupiter* (Victor Set M-30 and Columbia Set No. 72) and the E flat (V-9438 to V-9440 and Columbia Set No. 105), have long been available.

The G minor, together with the E flat and the *Jupiter*, was written during six weeks of the summer of 1788. Scored for a very small orchestra—without drums and trumpets—the work is quiet, subdued and restful, and the general effect is not unlike that of chamber music. Walter's reading is delicate and light, and Mozart's beautiful melodies are rounded off perfectly. Every minute detail stands out clearly and distinctly, and the orchestra holds together well. The string tone is soft and warm, and the woodwinds make themselves heard in proper balance. The high quality of the recording contributes to making this set one of the most welcome of recent releases.

CONCERTO



PAGANINI
V-EH418
 and
V-EH419
 IMPORTED

Concerto No. 1 in E Flat, Op. 6. Four sides. Played by Laszlo Szentgyorgyi (Violin) and Members of the Orchestra of the Berlin State Opera conducted by Clemens Schmalstich. Two 12-inch discs. Price \$1.75 each.

VIEUXTEMPS
C-LFX14
 to
C-LFX16
 IMPORTED

Concerto No. 5 in A Minor, Op. 37. Six sides. Played by M. Alfred Dubois (Violin) and Orchestra of the Society of Concerts of the Royal Conservatory, Brussels, under the direction of M. Desire Defauw. Three 12-inch discs. Price \$2.00 each.

Two of the greatest violinists of the past century are represented on these discs. Paganini (1782-1840), still ranked as perhaps the most skillful of all violin virtuosi, was one of the strangest characters in all musical history. Gambling, dissipating recklessly and astounding audiences everywhere with his marvelous fiddling—he once caused a sensation by performing brilliantly on the G string alone—Paganini spent the greater part of his life wandering about Europe. Living in such a manner naturally hindered his creative work, so that it is not strange that his compositions are not very numerous. He wrote eight violin concertos, though the orchestral parts for four of them were never completed. Only two, the first in E flat and the second in B minor (Op. 6 and 7), have been published. The first concerto was written in 1811, according to François-Joseph Fétis, who has been called the “most learned, laborious and prolific littérateur of his time” (1784-1871). The solo part is written in D, the solo instrument being tuned a semitone higher than usual, while the accompaniment is in E flat. Although not so indicated on the label, only the first of the three movements of the work is given here. Nearly a hundred bars of the opening of the violin and piano score (Leipzig: C. F. Peters) have been omitted on these discs. Essentially melodious, the music gives the soloist abundant opportunity to display his virtuosity. The orchestral part is little more than a modest accompaniment, and it seems, in places, unwieldy and cumbersome. Laszlo Szentgyorgyi commands a full, round tone, and he plays the work with the requisite verve and flourish.

Considerably less interesting is the *Concerto No. 5 in A Minor* by Henri Vieuxtemps. Vieuxtemps was born at Verviers, Belgium, in 1820, and died in Algiers in 1881. Called by *Grove's* “the Meyerbeer among composers for the violin,” Vieuxtemps, with de Bériot, stood at the head of the French school of violin playing. At the age of eight he made a concert tour. In 1834, when only fourteen years old, he played in London and made the acquaintance of the fabulous Paganini. Vieuxtemps visited America several times. His six concertos for violin are among his most important work. No. 5, played here, is very uneven in quality and has, indeed, little to recommend it. It is in two movements. Curiously dull and dry, it is not of sustained interest, and seems more useful as an exercise for the violinist than anything else. M. Alfred Dubois and the Orchestra of the Brussels Conservatory, under Defauw, labor heroically to inject a little life and vitality into the work, but their efforts, owing more to Vieuxtemps' strained music than to any fault of their own, are not conspicuously successful. The recording in both sets is excellent.

**CHOPIN****C-67800D**

to

C-67803D

Concerto No. 2 in F Minor, Op. 21. Played by Marguerite Long (Piano) and Orchestra of the Paris Conservatory conducted by Philippe Gaubert. Seven sides and

Mazurka, Op. 59, No. 3. One side. Played by Marguerite Long (Piano).

Four 12-inch discs in an album. Columbia Set No. 143. Price \$8.00.

The piano receives special attention from Columbia this month. In addition to the Schumann *Davidsbündler-Tänze* set, reviewed under PIANO, this album containing Chopin's popular second concerto is released. It was discussed on page 128 of the June issue.

BEETHOVEN**V-C1865**

to

V-C1868

IMPORTED

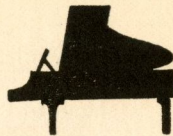
Concerto No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 37. Eight sides. Played by Mark Hambourg (Piano) and Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. Four 12-inch discs. Price \$1.75 each.

Miniature Score—Eulenburg No. 704.

When this concerto appeared abroad a month or so ago, it was received very coldly by the critics. Mark Hambourg's interpretation was found lacking in subtlety, and his tonal shortcomings elicited various sour comments. One critic even ventured so far as to say that "the piano tone might almost be that upon an old, pre-electrical disc." This, it becomes abundantly clear after hearing the records, is inordinately exaggerated. Recording and interpretation have somehow been confused. No one ever heard an old, pre-electrical disc that reproduced the piano tone one-half so realistically and with such rich volume as do these records. Played upon an adequate machine, the work comes out clearly and distinctly, giving one an excellent idea of what the concerto sounds like. The reproduction, indeed, is one of the few bright spots in an otherwise undistinguished performance. For it is unfortunately true that Hambourg's playing is not of the most ravishing. His reading is vigorous enough, and his efforts have been treated with great skill and politeness by the recorders. But his tone lacks character and solidity; it is not sufficiently sustained. The fine recording, too, only serves to show up these defects glaringly. The orchestra, conducted by Dr. Sargent, gives the soloist energetic support.

The *Third Concerto*, which dates from 1800, had its first performance in April, 1803, when the oratorio, *The Mount of Olives*, and the *Second Symphony* were also presented for the first time. Paul Bekker, the noted German critic, has drawn particular attention to the arrangement of keys. "The composer must have had some very special intention in following a C minor *allegro* with an E major *largo* and a C minor *rondo*," he says in his *Beethoven*. "Beethoven frequently set C major and E major side by side—in the first and second movements of the C major sonata, Op. 2, and within the first movement of the Waldstein sonata, for instance—but an E major piece between two C minor movements is quite extraordinary. The dictatorial, almost threatening opening with its reverberating fourths gives the clue to Beethoven's intention. The fact that the concerto-form represents a dialogue is clearly emphasized. The orchestra does not merely accompany; it argues with, supports, or contradicts the soloist. . . . The C minor concerto is a type of the traditional solo-concerto ennobled by depth of thought. . . ."

PIANO



SCHUMANN
C-67797D
 to
C-67799D

Die Davidsbündler-Tänze, Op. 6. Six sides. Played by Fanny Davies (Piano).
 Three 12-inch discs in an album. Columbia Set No. 142. Price \$6.00.

With the list of recorded versions of the well-known *Carnaval* ever swelling, it is good to note this release by the local Columbia Company of the less popular but surely no less interesting *Davidsbündler-Tänze*. That Fanny Davies, who despite her nearly seventy years plays with all the enthusiasm of youth, is the interpreter lends authenticity to the set, for she is widely known as one of the finest and most sympathetic of Schumann players, having studied with Mme. Schumann in Frankfurt. The set, though recorded in Europe, presumably in England, is given its first release anywhere in America.

In 1854 Schumann published a volume of selections from his contributions to the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* under the title of *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker* (*Collected Writings on Music and Musicians*). In the introduction appeared the following explanation of the Davidsbündler:

And another association may be mentioned here, which was more than a secret one, for it existed only in the head of its founder—the “Davidsbündler” (League of David, Davidites, etc.). It seemed not unfitting, in order to express different points of view on art problems, to invent contrasting artist characters, of which Florestan and Eusebius were the chief, with Master Raro as intermediary. This “Davidsbündler” idea ran like a red thread through the paper, uniting “*Wahrheit*” and “*Dichtung*” in humorous fashion. Later these companions, not unpleasing to the readers of the time, vanished entirely from the paper, and since a Peri lured them to distant zones nothing more has been heard of their work as authors.

And, again, in a letter: “The ‘Davidsbund’ is only a spiritual, romantic one, as you will have noticed long ago. Mozart was just as great a ‘Bündler’ as is Berlioz now, as you are, without exactly being created so by diploma. Florestan and Eusebius are my double nature which, like Master Raro, I should like to fuse into a man. . . The other veiled ones are *partly* persons, and much of the life of the ‘Davidsbündler’ is also taken from reality. . .”

Composed in 1837 and dedicated to Walther von Goethe, these dances were published the following year in two books of nine numbers each, under the following title: *Davidsbündlertänze für das Pianoforte, Walther von Goethe zugeeignet von Florestan und Eusebius*. The following old German saying appeared on the title page:

In all und jeder Zeit
 Verknüpft sich Lust und Leid
 Bleibt fromm in Lust und Seid
 Beim Leid mit Muth bereit.

(Aye hand in hand go weal and woe,
 In weal be good, in woe thy courage show.)

In the early editions, the various dances, although having no titles, were signed “F,” or “E,” or “F and E” (Florestan and Eusebius); and the last dance of the first book (No. 9) carried the following superscription: “Hereupon Florestan finished, and his lips quivered painfully.” Similarly No. 18, the last of book two, bore this: “Quite superfluously Eusebius remarked as follows, but his eyes beamed blissfully



the while." These, however, were omitted from later editions. It was during the year of the composition of the *Davidsbündler-Tänze* that Schumann asked for the hand of Clara Wieck, and was refused by her father on the ground that he was not sufficiently well established.

In a letter to Clara, Schumann wrote: "There are many marriage thoughts in the dances—they originated in the most joyful excitement I can ever remember—I will explain them to you some time. . . ." And later he added: "But my Clara will discover what is in the dances which are dedicated to her more than anything else of mine—the story is a whole *Polterabend* [festivity on the evening before marriage], and now you can picture to yourself the beginning and the end. If ever I was happy at the pianoforte it was when I was composing these. . . ." And, finally, in a letter of March 17th, 1838: "You pass very hastily over the *Davidsbündler*; I think they are quite different from the *Carnaval*, and are to it as faces are to masks. But I may be wrong, as I have not forgotten them yet. One thing I know, that they arose in happiness, the other often in toil and trouble. . . ."

All the dances are rendered here with the exception of Nos. 3, 7, 15 and 16. In these pieces, which are alternately tender, playful and delicate, everything is attributed to Florestan or Eusebius, or, in some instances, to both. Miss Davies' thoroughly fine and intelligently proportioned interpretation is full of distinguishing qualities. Playing with a felicitous mixture of sentiment, warmth of feeling and restrained boisterousness, she evokes the necessary romantic atmosphere, though maintaining a respectable distance from anything resembling cloying sentimentality. The recording is not sensational, but it is of an extremely fine quality and reproduces Miss Davies' interpretation plausibly and effectively.

**LISZT-
BUSONI
HOROWITZ-
DEMENY
V-1468**

Paganini Etude in E Flat Major. (Liszt-Busoni.) One side and
Danse Exotique. (Horowitz-Demeny.) One side. Both played
by Vladimir Horowitz (Piano). One 10-inch disc. Price \$1.50.

**CHOPIN
B-90068**

Mazurka in B Flat Major, Op. 7, No. 1. One side and
Fantasie Impromptu in G Sharp Minor, Op. 66. One side. Both
played by Alexandre Brailowsky (Piano).
One 12-inch disc. Price \$1.50.

The Horowitz disc is a remarkable recording achievement and comes about as close to reaching perfection as seems, at the moment, mechanically possible. Everything is so clear, so perfectly balanced, and so altogether like the real thing that one can scarcely credit his ears. There are no dubious notes, no blurs, not even any objectionable variations in pitch and tone. The treble comes out as cleanly and clearly as the bass, and the two are plausibly balanced. One only hopes that the recorders can remember precisely how it was done, so that we may have more like it in the future. As for the works presented, they are very acceptable: the Paganini-Liszt-Busoni number glitters under Horowitz's nimble fingers, and the reverse side, the artist's own composition, is in jazz style. It is crisply played. . . . Alexandre Brailowsky's piano recordings have already achieved a substantial fame through their faithful reproduction of his instrument. While these two Chopin pieces do not reveal him at his best and most winning, they still are rendered with sufficient skill and insight to make the disc a desirable one.

BRAHMS**V-D1828**

to

V-D1830

IMPORTED

Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, Op. 24. Six sides.
Played by Benno Moisevitch (Piano).
Three 12-inch discs. Price \$2.00 each.

**V-DB1388**

and

V-DB1389

IMPORTED

Variations on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 35. Four sides. Played
by Wilhelm Backhaus (Piano).
Two 12-inch discs. Price \$2.50 each.

Brahms was extremely fond of the piano, and some of his earliest compositions were piano pieces. Throughout his life, indeed, he never seemed to lose his liking for the instrument. The piano variations may be divided into four separate groups: (1) Variations in F sharp for pianoforte on a theme by Schumann, Op. 9; Variations in E flat major for pianoforte duet on a theme by Schumann, Op. 23; (2) Variations in D major for pianoforte on (a) an original theme and (b) on a Hungarian Song, Op. 21; (3) Variations and Fugue in B flat major on a theme by Handel, Op. 24; (4) Studies for the pianoforte: Variations on a theme by Paganini, Op. 35 (two books). Of these, only the last two, the *Handel* and *Paganini Variations*, have been recorded. Appearing simultaneously, they provide an interesting and profitable study in the contrasting methods of two eminent pianists.

The *Handel Variations* were written in 1861 and were published the following year. They are based on a theme from Handel's second book of suites, where, incidentally, it is already treated as a subject for variations, though Handel wrote only five on it, while Brahms, not content with twenty-five, added a fugue, too. These variations, with their close, rich texture, their fine, robust power and their energetic climaxes, are full of good humor and high spirits. Though they recall Handel in their expansiveness and broad sweep, one is always conscious of the fact that it is Brahms who is speaking. Walter Niemann calls them the "radiant crown of all Brahms' variations." The piano effects, he thinks, suggest here and there the orchestra. For example, the second variation, in triplets, he feels, resembles the woodwind; the seventh a horn quartet; the fanfares of the bass part of the eighth the trumpets; the eleventh a clarinet solo; the twelfth a flute solo; the thirteenth stringed instruments in the lower register; the nineteenth the combined woodwinds; and the twentieth the full string orchestra.

The *Paganini Variations* date from 1866. Based on a twelve-bar theme in A minor from one of Paganini's caprices. (No. 24 of *Capricci*, Op. 1), they comprise two books of formidable technical studies. Though they were primarily intended to set and solve technical problems of the utmost difficulty, they are something more than mere brilliant technical studies, and there is no suggestion in them of the empty cheapness generally found in works that have nothing more to commend them than a somewhat showy virtuosity. As played by Backhaus, they sparkle and glow, full of fantasy and rich harmonies, and one forgets entirely their technical difficulties and thinks of them only as capital music.

Perhaps it would have been a better arrangement if Backhaus had played the *Handel Variations* and Moisevitch the *Paganini*. For the former demand something more than superlative technique: they call for warmth and imagination and resilience, and these qualities Backhaus possesses to a higher degree than does Moisevitch. At any rate, the general excellence of the recording in both sets permits the pianists' efforts to be reproduced with a fair amount of realism, and the discs add notably to Brahms' recorded works.



CHAMBER MUSIC

**BEETHOVEN
MOZART**

V-DB1365

to

V-DB1367

IMPORTED

Sonata in D Major, Op. 12, No. 1. (Beethoven.) Five sides and Sonata in C Major: Andante sostenuto (K. 296). (Mozart.) One side. Both played by Master Yehudi Menuhin (Violin) and Hubert Giesen (Piano). Three 12-inch discs. Price \$2.50 each.

While our older violinists industriously continue their dreary course of presenting, month after month, all the unspeakable trifles of violin literature, young Yehudi Menuhin turns stalwartly to more substantial works—and with genuinely astonishing results. It is an ironic commentary on the wisdom that is supposed to come with age that this young violinist, still a child, should play Beethoven's *D Major Sonata* while Fritz Kreisler releases at the same time a thing called *Midnight Bells*.

The *Sonata in D Major* is the first of the three violin and piano sonatas that comprise Op. 12, which Beethoven in 1799 dedicated to his friend and teacher, Antonio Salieri. Salieri was a noted dramatic composer of the time, and he seems to have been one of the few teachers who succeeded in winning Beethoven's respect. The sonata is in three movements, the second of which is a theme with four variations. Although the piece belongs among Beethoven's early works, it is full of individuality, character and humor. There is a youthful freshness and buoyancy about this music, too, that make it well suited to Menuhin's supple bow. The set unquestionably is the young artist's most ambitious and successful recording achievement thus far. His playing fairly dazzles with its extraordinary assurance and verve, and it is surprisingly mature. On the odd side of the set, Yehudi essays the *Andante sostenuto* from Mozart's *Sonata in C Major* (K. 296), which was composed in 1778. It is lovely, melodious music, and Yehudi triumphs again, revealing a full, glowing tone that is in direct contrast to that employed in the Beethoven sonata. Hubert Giesen is responsible for the piano parts in both works, and he has performed his duties with skill and authority. Excellent recording rounds out a distinguished set.

MOZART

B-90069

Quartet in G Major: Minuet and Finale; Molto Allegro (K. 387).
Two sides. Played by the Guarneri String Quartet.
One 12-inch disc. Price \$1.50.

Miniature Score—Eulenburg No. 1.

The Guarneri Quartet, for some mysterious reason, seems rather excessively fond of recording isolated movements. Last month they were heard in the *Nocturne* from Borodin's *Quartet in D Major*, and now they offer the second and final movements from Mozart's *Quartet in G Major*. Still further examples of this unhappy passion can be found in the Polydor supplements. The playing is robust and vigorous, and at times it is not altogether free from a certain coarseness. More delicacy and polish would have been welcome. Yet there is an attraction in such verve and exuberance. The recording is clear and powerful, maybe just a bit too powerful, according to your taste and machine. The labelling on the review copy failed to indicate a K number, and the quartet was designated as being in G minor instead of G major; but this, we understand, will be corrected before the records reach the public.

FRANCK**C-LFX6**

to

C-LFX9

IMPORTED

Trio in F Sharp. Eight sides. Played by the Court of Belgium Trio. Four 12-inch discs. Price \$2.00 each.



The first of César Franck's four pianoforte trios, the *Trio in F Sharp*, was written toward the end of 1841, when the composer, a youth of nineteen, was a pupil at the Paris Conservatoire. The trio forms part of Op. 1, which was published under the following title: *Trois trios concertans pour piano, violon et violoncelle, dédiés à Sa Majesté Léopold I., roi des Belges, par César-Auguste Franck, de Liège*. Vincent d'Indy has said of this lovely work that it "was actually the point of departure of that entire synthetic school of symphony which sprang up in France late in the nineteenth century; and, for this reason, it marks an event in the history of music."

Two salient cyclic themes, treated fugally and in the form of the variation, serve as a foundation for the *Trio in F Sharp*. The first movement, an *Andante*, comprises five sections, in each of which one or the other of the two principal themes appears. Thus the first theme is the subject of the first, third and fourth sections, while in the second and fifth sections the second theme is the subject. Fundamentally, then, the movement is a more or less simple exposition of these two themes. Written in the form of a *Scherzo*, the *Allegro* has two *Trios*, the second of which, the climax of the movement, is formed by the second of the two germinal themes upon a rhythm with which we are already familiar, having heard it at first in the opening *Andante* and next as the main subject of the first *Trio*. An amplification of the first cyclic theme acts as the chief tune of the *Finale*. There is some ingenious development, and the work closes in the key of F sharp minor.

Though it is not reckoned among Franck's major works, this trio is none the less extremely beautiful music. Its simple dignity and mystic serenity are easily grasped, and it appeals at the very first hearing. The Court of Belgium Trio, appearing for the first time as an ensemble on the records, is composed of MM. A. Dubois (Violin), M. Dambois (Violoncello) and E. Bosquet (Piano). M. Dubois is the soloist in the *Vieuxtemps* concerto, reviewed under *CONCERTO* in this issue. The interpretation is an eloquent one, and the recording is at all times satisfactory. The set is warmly recommended.

**TRADI-
TIONAL
DUBENSKY
V-4186**

Londonderry Air. (Irish tune from County Derry—arranged by Percy A. Grainger.) One side and
Gossips. (A. Dubensky.) One side. Both played by the Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonieta conducted by Fabien Sevitzyky. One 10-inch disc. Price \$1.00.

The gramophone companies haven't finished with the *Londonderry Air* yet. Already available in numerous versions, the sturdy old tune appears again, this time played by the Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonieta, whose performance is expressive and smooth. The tone of the strings is exquisite. *Gossips* is a charming little piece in which the strings are plucked throughout. Its composer, A. Dubensky, is a violinist in the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, and his piece is dedicated to Mr. Sevitzyky.



OPERA

**LEON-
CAVALLO**

**V-9655
to
V-9663**

I Pagliacci: Opera in Two Acts. Eighteen sides. Rendered by Famous Artists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala, Milan, under the direction of Carlo Sabajno. Nine 12-inch discs in an album. Victor Set M-76. Price \$13.50.

THE CAST

Nedda	Adelaide Saraceni
Canio	Alessandro Valente
Tonio	Apollo Granforte
Peppe	Nello Palai
Silvio	Leonildo Basi
Villagers and Peasants.	

Like *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *I Pagliacci*, by reason of its brief length, its copious supply of good and easily grasped tunes and its exciting, swiftly moving action, is an ideal opera for recording purposes. Leoncavallo's gaudy masterpiece was first performed at the Teatro dal Verme, Milan, May 17th, 1892, under the direction of Arturo Toscanini. Slightly over a year later it was produced at the Grand Opera House in New York. Now one of the established fixtures in the repertoire of the opera companies, it is given regularly year after year, apparently with undiminished success. Coming from the country of the opera's origin, the present performance is full of genuine Italian color and atmosphere; but happily there is none of that rather excessive ardor which sometimes sounds perilously like screaming and shouting: everything is admirably restrained and in good taste. There isn't a dull moment in the entire set. We frequently hear expressed, in varying tones of bitterness, the complaint that opera-going is painful because of the necessity it imposes on one of contemplating the far from edifying spectacle of fabulously stout operatic characters lumbering absurdly about the stage. These portly persons need no longer deter one from enjoying grand opera. With the increasing excellence of operatic recording, it is now possible to listen at one's ease, with the mind free to conjure up thrilling pictures of young and impossibly lovely heroines and gallant heroes.

The Nedda here, Adelaide Saraceni, brings to her performance a small but charming voice and a good knowledge of how to employ it properly. In her duet with Tonio, in the solo directly preceding this duet, and again in the scene with Silvio she is attractive and convincing. Apollo Granforte excels in every one of his important scenes. His singing in the familiar Prologue and in that part near the close of the first act, where Tonio expresses his gratification at having succeeded in bringing to Canio's attention the aberrations of Nedda, is energetic and striking. Only slightly less distinguished are the performances of Alessandro Valente, Nello Palai and Leonildo Basi. One of the gratifying things about this album is the fact that the singers are not glorified at the expense of the orchestra. Both are heard in what seems to be just the proper balance. The mellow, equal tone of the orchestra of La Scala shows off Leoncavallo's fat tunes superbly, and Sabajno's conducting is clean-cut and polished. Peppe's trumpet and Tonio's big drum are recorded realistically. There is a negligible cut in the duet between Silvio and Nedda (page 101 to 107, piano-vocal score), but nothing of any consequence is omitted.

SULLIVAN

V-D1785

to

V-D1795

IMPORTED

Iolanthe or The Peer and the Peri: Comic Opera in Two Acts. (Gilbert-Sullivan.) Rendered by George Baker, Darrell Fancourt, Derek Oldham, Sydney Granville, Nellie Briercliffe, Leslie Rands, Bertha Lewis, Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Dr. Malcolm Sargent. Under the personal supervision of Rupert D'Oyly Carte. Eleven 12-inch discs. Price, complete in album, \$22.00.



These H. M. V. Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, recorded under the authoritative direction of Rupert D'Oyly Carte, must be received with considerable gloom by rival recording companies. For they set a standard difficult to equal and well-nigh impossible to surpass, thus removing very effectually any need for additional recordings. The gramophone has rendered an inestimable service by making readily available an enormous amount of what is called serious music; but tastes that thrive on Brahms, Wagner and Beethoven need lighter entertainment, too. And in these sad days of Noble Experiments, saponaceous theme songs and insupportable jazz, anything properly describable as civilized entertainment requires more than ordinary assiduity to find. Thus the Gilbert and Sullivan albums, representing the most successful attempt yet made to provide collectors with genuinely good light music, belong properly among the most laudable achievements of the gramophone.

One of the enjoyable things about these collaborations is Sullivan's unparalleled gift for setting Gilbert's gorgeously amusing lines to plausible music. What commonly passes for humor in music is ninety-nine times out of a hundred pretty dismal stuff. "It is remarkable to observe what an extraordinarily primitive sense of humor most musicians and musical audiences possess," Cecil Gray remarks somewhere in his *A Survey of Contemporary Music*. "A composer has only to write a low note for the bassoon, *fortissimo*, for no apparent reason—for obviously if it occurred logically at the end of a descending phrase it would not be amusing at all—and the whole audience will lean back in its collective chair and rock with inextinguishable laughter, while the literary equivalent of it, in the pages of *Comic Cuts*, would assuredly fail to bring even a wan smile to the face of a District Messenger boy." This process described so feelingly by Mr. Gray is an all too familiar one these days, so that it is doubly refreshing to listen to Sullivan's singularly refined, neat and perfectly artistic orchestration, with its freedom from illogical and fatuous exaggerations. Like Johann Strauss, Sullivan possessed the gift of hitting the balance of art and gayety to a nicety, and the variety and excellence of his ideas are unfailingly interesting.

The D'Oyly Carte forces give as lively and proficient a performance as ever. Everything is highly characteristic, clear, definite and titillating. Dr. Malcolm Sargent and a good orchestra perform the complete *Overture* in a sprightly fashion; before it has progressed a third of the way through, indeed, the charm and piquancy of Sullivan's music has prepared the glowing listener for the magnificent fooling that is to follow. To remark upon each record would require more space than is presently available, and so many fine moments in the set will have to go unsung here. The cast is, for the most part, familiar, and the large chorus is well-drilled. The opening chorus of fairies, with its lovely *pizzicato* accompaniment, and the *Peers' Chorus* are particularly good, the brass in the latter blazing out with a convincing ring. On record 10, where Lord Tolloller and the male chorus, highly scandalized at what they conceive to be the dubious behavior of Iolanthe and Strephon, sing that they "heard the minx remark, she'd meet him after dark," the effect is irresistible. The recording is quite as fresh and sparkling as the operetta itself.

R. J. M.



MOZART
V-1467

{ Don Giovanni: Act I—Finch han dal vino. One side and
Don Giovanni: Act 2—Deh vieni alla finestra (Serenata). One
side. Both sung by Ezio Pinza (Bass) with orchestra.
One 10-inch disc. Price \$1.50.

**GODARD
JAKOBOWSKI**
V-1469

{ Jocelyn: Act 2—Angels Guard Thee (Berceuse). (Godard.)
One side and
Erminie: Act 2—Lullaby. (Jakobowski.) One side. Both sung
by Hulda Lashanska (Soprano) with orchestra.
One 10-inch disc. Price \$1.50.

**BIZET
LEON-
CAVALLO**
B-50163

{ Carmen: Act 2—Toreador Song. (Bizet.) One side and
Pagliacci: Prologue. (Leoncavallo.) One side. Both sung by
Michael Bohnen (Baritone) with orchestra.
One 12-inch disc. Price \$2.00.

**MASCAGNI
DONIZETTI**
B-90070

{ Cavalleria Rusticana: Opening Chorus — Gli aranci olezzano.
(Mascagni.) One side and
Don Pasquale: Act 3—Vado Corro. (Donizetti.) One side.
Both sung by La Scala Chorus, Milan, with Orchestra.
One 12-inch disc. Price \$1.50.

Pinza's disc is one of the best he had thus far made. The two brief numbers from *Don Giovanni* are thoroughly delightful, and the manner in which they are recorded and rendered calls for unstinted praise. The first selection, from Act 1, is the aria, *For a carousal*, in which the Don, singing joyously and at top speed, bids his servant, Leporello, make preparations for what, according to his glowing description, appears to be an exceedingly lively party. Pinza concludes the aria with an uproarious laugh. The reverse side contains the serenade, *From out thy casement gleaming*. It is gratifying to note that the proper mandolin accompaniment is used. . . . Hulda Lashanska's pieces are obviously designed for a different audience. She sings them with commendable dignity and restraint. . . . Both the *Toreador Song* and the *Prologue* come too obviously from the studio; they lack, perhaps because of the insufficiency of the accompanying orchestra, the genuine theatrical air so essential to such music. Bohnen sings the former with gusto, but one misses the chorus. And though he gets a certain amount of drama into the *Prologue*, the flimsy orchestral foundation and the rather generous orchestral cuts do not help matters. . . . The *Cavalleria* number is another recording of the opening chorus by apparently the same artists who sang it in the complete set, reviewed here last month. Although the orchestra is not so large as that in the album set nor the recording so brilliant, the chorus sings with admirable precision and energy. This version is somewhat abbreviated. The *Don Pasquale* selection is rendered with similar competence, though one could perhaps enjoy it more if it did not, now and then, bear so strong a resemblance to that unnecessary variety of noise known as a college yell.

CHORAL



**BRAHMS
HAYDN**

**V-EH257
and
V-EH258**
IMPORTED

Ein Deutsches Requiem, Op. 45; I—Selig sind, die da Leid Tragen.
(Brahms.) Three sides and
Jahreszeiten: Komm o holder Lenz. (Haydn.) One side. Sung
by the Chor der Singakademie under the direction of Prof. Georg
Schumann. Two 12-inch discs. Price \$1.75 each.

BRAHMS

**V-EH265
and
V-EH266**
IMPORTED

Ein Deutsches Requiem: II—Denn alles Fleisch, es ist wie Gras.
Four sides. Sung by the Chor der Singakademie under the direc-
tion of Prof. Georg Schumann.
Two 12-inch discs. Price \$1.75 each.

V-EG939
IMPORTED

Ein Deutsches Requiem: IV—Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen.
Two sides. Sung by the Chor der Singakademie under the direc-
tion of Prof. Georg Schumann. One 10-inch disc. Price \$1.25.

Miniature Score—Eulenburg No. 952.

It is said that the death of Brahms' mother in 1866 moved him to write the *German Requiem*. If so, the memory of no mother was ever honored by a more noble tribute. The first performance in Bremen Cathedral, Good Friday, 1868, was a great event, Brahms entering the Cathedral with his great friend, Madame Clara Schumann.

Not conceived along the mighty lines of the *Passions* or the *B minor Mass* of Bach, or of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, yet this is great music—the outpouring of a great soul guided by a keen intelligence and informed by a penetrating insight.

Handel, Haydn, and Mendelssohn all left noteworthy works in the oratorio form, yet these works seem but entertainments with a surface gloss of religion when placed alongside Brahms' *German Requiem*. This is distinctly a non-liturgical work. It is not a "Requiem Mass," and has nothing in common with such compositions either in form or content. Indeed there is a question as to just what it is, but it probably comes nearer being oratorio than anything else. Brahms himself selected the words from the Holy Scriptures. They are a skilful blending of isolated texts, beginning on the serene note of comfort and running through various contrasting moods, ending finally with triumph and eternal peace. There are seven sections, with incidental soprano and baritone solos. Both choral and orchestral writing are masterful, characteristic of Brahms at his very best.

Three of the sections are here recorded—the first, second, and fourth. There is a short cut of nineteen measures, really a repetition of the orchestral introduction to section II. The labeling is confused, as the sections are not numbered, and there is no indication as to what portion of the work is being played on records EH265 and EH266. It turns out to be section II. The recording is very good, and the Choir of the Singakademie manages to convey something of the heavenly peace of section IV.

H. B. S.

The Musical Masterpiece Series

Rachmaninoff's *The Isle of the Dead* (Opus 29. Symphonic Poem after the Painting by A. Böcklin). Played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of the composer, on three double-faced Victor Records in Album M-75 (Nos. 7219-7221) and in automatic sequence, Album AM-75 (Nos. 7222-7224). List Price, \$6.50.

Böcklin's famous painting, "The Isle of the Dead," inspired Rachmaninoff to the composition of this monumental orchestral work, often considered his masterpiece, and certainly one of the most solemnly imposing scores of recent years. Rachmaninoff has not only caught the spirit of Böcklin's canvas, he has expressed the feelings aroused in him by the painting, in a composition of great majesty, beauty, and overwhelming emotional force. And though the composition is dominated throughout by this solemn mood, it abounds with a fascinating interplay of melody and rhythm, woven into a sumptuous tapestry of orchestral color. Not without reason has "The Isle of the Dead" taken a place in the repertoire of most great symphonic organizations.

Victor is particularly happy to present a recording of this masterpiece played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of the composer. Mr. Rachmaninoff was for a number of years an operatic and symphonic conductor in Russia, and "The Isle of the Dead" was given its American premier under his baton during his first visit to the United States, in December, 1909. Music lovers will therefore welcome this authoritative interpretation of one of the most impressive works of modern times.

"The Isle of the Dead" occupies five record surfaces. The sixth is given to another Rachmaninoff composition, "Vocalise"—an orchestral arrangement by the composer, of one of his beautifully melodic songs, Opus 34. It should be added that the explanatory booklet accompanying the album contains a reproduction of Böcklin's painting.



Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci* (Opera in two Acts). Performed by artists, chorus and orchestra of La Scala, Milan, Italy, on nine double-faced Victor Records in Album M-76 (Nos. 9655-9663), and in automatic sequence, AM-76 (Nos. 9664-9672). List Price, \$13.50.

I Pagliacci is one of the operas that never fail to arouse great enthusiasm, for it is a throbbing, human drama, and it is filled with thrilling melodies. The famous *Prologue*, the splendid *Bell Chorus*, the *Ballatella* (or *Bird Song*), *Canio's* great air, *Vesti La Giubba*, the charming music of the Harlequin Play, and the breath-taking denouement—all these are but a few of the high lights of a score always replete with melody and vital with emotion.

The performance is that of famous soloists, chorus, and orchestra of La Scala, Milan, and is conducted by Carlo Sabajno, who has become well known to American gramophiles through his splendid work in the complete recordings of *Aida* and *Rigoletto*. The album is accompanied by a complete libretto, keyed to the records, and containing both the original Italian words and the glowing English translation by Henry Grafton Chapman.



Victor Division
R C A VICTOR COMPANY, Inc.
Camden, New Jersey

**BORTNJAN-
SKY
GRETCHAN-
INOFF**
C-50239D

Kolj Slavenj (How Glorious!). (Bortnjansky.) One side and
Zwei Alte Hochzeitslieder (Two Old Wedding Songs).
(Gretchaninoff.) One side. Both sung by the Don Cossacks
Choir under the direction of Serge Jaroff.
One 12-inch disc. Price \$1.25.



The Don Cossacks Choir performs brilliantly in these numbers. Dimitri Stepanovich Bortnjansky was born in the Ukraine in 1752 and died in 1825. Tschaikowsky edited his works, which were published in ten volumes in St. Petersburg. *Kolj Slavenj* is sung expressively by the choir, and its quiet, rich beauty is emphasized pleasingly. . . . The *Two Old Wedding Songs* are more exciting, and the Choir gives evidence of an astonishing virtuosity. Alexander Tikhonovitch Gretchaninoff was born in Moscow in 1864. He was a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakow. A versatile and prolific composer, he has written operas, symphonies, numerous songs and many choruses. The recording is a good example of choral reproduction at its best.

**LAZZO
SWEELINCK**
C-D19214
IMPORTED

Madrigaux: (1) Echo; (2) Quand mon mari. (Lasso.) One
side and
(3) Tu as tout seul. (Sweelinck.) One side. Both sung by
La Chorale "Coecilia" d'Anvers under the direction of M.
Louis de Vocht. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$1.00.

**NAVARRO
PATIÑO**
V-AE2990
IMPORTED

Enojado esta el Abril. (Navarro.) One side and
Labradora de Loheches. (Patiño.) One side. Both sung by
Orfeon de Ciegos de Santa Lucia under the direction of Maestro
Barbara. One 10-inch disc. Price, \$1.25.

These madrigals, representing the Spanish, Flemish and Dutch varieties, were all written during the sixteenth century. Of the four composers listed, Orlando di Lasso, of course, was the greatest. The most gifted of the Netherlands composers and after Palestrina probably the outstanding musician of the sixteenth century, Lasso wrote about 2500 compositions. He was born at Mons in 1532 and died at Munich in 1594. The first number here *O la, o che bon eccho* is written for eight voices, and is an "echo" piece in the Venetian style, one choir of four voices echoing the other. It is the last of the twenty-three early pieces published by Lasso in 1581 under the title of *Libro de villanelle, moresche et altre canzoni a 4, 5, 6 et 8 voci*. It is thought to have been of later origin than the others. The second number, written to French words, is full of energy and sharp contrasts. Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck—there are seven different ways to spell his name—was born in 1562 and died in 1621. His principal claim to fame is based upon his vast influence as an organist and as the founder of a school of organists. Sometime between 1577 and 1581 he was appointed to the organistship of Old Church, Amsterdam, a post previously held by his father. For some years Sweelinck was a salient figure in the brilliant Amsterdam society. During his life he published only vocal music. The chanson here recorded, *Tu as tout seul*, comes from Vol. I of *Arion*. It is very melodious and well-balanced.

Juan Navarro and Carlos Patiño were Spaniards. Navarro, 1530-1604, was born in Seville and wrote both church music and madrigals. Patiño, whose exact dates are a mystery, was first heard of in 1632. His works include incidental music to plays and church music. Both madrigals are simple, charming affairs.

COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS*

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CHOPIN CONCERTO NO. 2, IN F MINOR, OP. 21, FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA. This early work of Chopin expresses some of the great Pole's most eloquent and poetical thoughts. In every movement we follow his inspiration down winding by-roads to come upon unforgettable musical figures of new and ravishing beauty. The performance too is an inspiration, an unforced and authentic interpretation by a soloist of European fame, supported by the famous orchestra of the Paris Conservatory.

Columbia Masterworks Set No. 143

Chopin: Concerto No. 2, in F Minor, Op. 21, for Piano and Orchestra. By Marguerite Long, with Orchestra of the Paris Conservatory, conducted by Philippe Gaubert.

In Seven Parts. \$8.00 with album.

SCHUMANN DIE DAVIDSBÜNDLERTÄNZE, OP. 6, FOR PIANO. Schumann was but little behind Chopin in discovering and revealing new beauties in the piano key board. These charming pieces, spontaneous outpourings of his romantic youthful period, form a milestone in the development of his genius as a creative musician. Fanny Davies, richly endowed favorite pupil of Clara Schumann, has given a superb recording.

Columbia Masterworks Set No. 142

Schumann: Die Davidsbündlertänze, Op. 6, for Piano. By Fanny Davies. Three 12-Inch Records. \$6.00 with album.

MENDELSSOHN MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM: OVERTURE. This familiar and delightful work, fittingly described as one of the most remarkable productions of any youthful mind, takes on new vitality with the recording by M. Elie Cohen, Musical Director of the Paris Opéra-Comique.

Columbia Record Nos. 67795-D and 67796-D—\$2.00 each.

Mendelssohn: Midsummer Night's Dream: Overture, in 4 parts. Symphony Orchestra under direction of Elie Cohen, chef d'orchestre Opéra-Comique, Paris.



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"Magic Notes"

**BEETHOVEN
BURKE**

V-C1878
IMPORTED

The Mount of Olives: Hallelujah. (Beethoven.) One side and St. Patrick's Prayer. (Arr. Burke.) One side. Both sung by the Choir of Temple Church, London. Organist and director: G. Thaiben Ball. One 12-inch disc. Price \$1.75.



The *Mount of Olives* number is a careless piece of work. The singing is spiritless, the selection is cut, and the recording is not of the best. The *St. Patrick's Prayer*, arranged here by Burke, is somewhat better.

BACH

V-C1850
IMPORTED

Blessing, Glory and Wisdom. Two sides. Sung by the Westminster Abbey Choir conducted by Dr. E. Bullock. One 12-inch disc. Price \$1.75.

VICTORIA

V-AB578
IMPORTED

O Magnum Misterium. One side and Caligaverunt Oculi Mei. One side. Both sung by Orfeo Catalá de Barcelona conducted by Maestro Millet. One 12-inch disc. Price \$2.00.

The Bach and Victoria numbers are all motets for unaccompanied voices. The rendering given the Bach selection is careful and straightforward. The voices of the Choir of Westminster Abbey stand out clearly and firmly, and the diction is remarkable for its clarity and purity. . . . Luis Tomás de Victoria, who is generally known in musical history by his name in its Italianized form, Tommaso Ludovico da Vittoria, was a renowned Spanish church composer. He was born in Avila, Spain, in either 1535 or 1540 and died in Madrid in 1611. A friend and disciple of Palestrina, he went to Rome in his early youth. In the Roman school he ranks next to Palestrina, whose influence upon him is clearly discernible.

ORGAN



BACH

C-DX36
IMPORTED

Toccata in F. Two sides. Played by Anton van der Horst (Organ). One 12-inch disc. Price \$2.00.

BACH

V-C1876
IMPORTED

Prelude and Fugue in A Minor. Two sides. Played by Dr. E. Bullock (Organ). One 12-inch disc. Price \$1.75.

Anton van der Horst's first record is a good one. Playing on the organ in the Central Hall, Westminster, he makes his début with Bach's towering *Toccata in F*. Obviously a competent performer, he seems to have an excellent conception of the limitations of the gramophone, and his interpretation, an eminently satisfactory one, is governed accordingly. The reproduction is clear and firm, free from blurs and such disagreeable things. No strain, in short, is imposed on one's credulity in calling this music organ music. . . . Dr. Bullock's performance of the *Prelude and Fugue in A Minor* is another example of clear, smooth organ recording. The day of organ records sounding like, in Harvey Grace's expressive words, a "mixture of smear, fog and blast" belongs happily to the past. Dr. Bullock plays the piece on the organ of Westminster Abbey.

Outstanding New Victor Records

Grand opera is one of the leading contributors to this month's list of New Victor Records. The exotic fervors of *Salome's Dance*, immortal melodies from *Don Giovanni*, and two operatic slumber songs, constitute these varied offerings. In addition, music lovers will welcome the other new records by world famous artists, and the fascinating instrumental numbers played by the Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonietta, and the Victor Symphony Orchestra.

Salome's Dance (from Richard Strauss's "Salome") (three sides) and

Japanese Nocturne (Eichheim) (one side).
Played by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra on Victor Records 7260 and 7259. List Price, \$2.00 each.

Don Giovanni—Finch Han dal Vino (For a Carousal) and

Don Giovanni—Serenata (Mozart). Sung by Ezio Pinza on Victor Record 1467. List Price, \$1.50.

Jocelyn—Angels Guard Thee (Berceuse) (Godard) and

Erminie—Lullaby (Jakobowski). Sung by Hulda Lashanska on Victor Record 1469. List Price, \$1.50.

Londonderry Air (Irish Tune from County Derry) (Arr. Grainger) and

Gossips (Dubensky). Played by Fabien Sevitzy—Philadelphia Chamber String Simfonietta on Victor Record 4186. List Price, \$1.00.

Adagio and Allegro (A Major) (Boccherini). Played by Pablo Casals ('cellist) on two sides of Victor Record 7258. List Price, \$2.00.

Se . . . (If) (Mancini-Denza) and

Notte Lunare (Moonlit Night) (Picchianti-Seismit-Doda). Sung by Beniamino Gigli on Victor Record 7261. List Price, \$2.00.

Paganini Etude in E Flat Major (Liszt-Busoni) and

Danse Exotique (Horowitz-Demeny). Played by Vladimir Horowitz (pianist) on Victor Record 1468. List Price, \$1.50.

The Old Refrain (Viennese Popular Song) (Transcribed by Kreisler) and

Midnight Bells (from "The Opera Ball") (Heuberger). Played by Fritz Kreisler (violinist) on Victor Record 1465. List Price, \$1.50.

In the Mountain Pass (No. 1 from "Caucasian Sketches") (Ippolitow-Iwanow) and

In the Mosque (No. 3 from "Caucasian Sketches") (Ippolitow-Iwanow). Played by Victor Symphony Orchestra on Victor Record 36017. List Price, \$1.25.



Victor Division
R C A VICTOR COMPANY, Inc.
Camden, New Jersey

VOCAL



**DENZA
SEISMIT-
DODA**
V-7261

Se. . . (If). (E. Mancini-Luigi Denza.) One side and
Notte Lunare (Moonlit Night). (Silvio Picchianti-A. Seismit-
Doda.) One side. Both sung by Beniamino Gigli (Tenor)
with orchestra. One 12-inch disc. Price \$2.00.

**TREHARNE
JOHNSON**
C-2240D

Corals. (Treharne.) One side and
If Thou Wert Blind. (Johnson.) One side. Both sung by Louis
Graveure (Tenor) with piano accompaniment by Walter Golde.
One 10-inch disc. Price \$0.75.

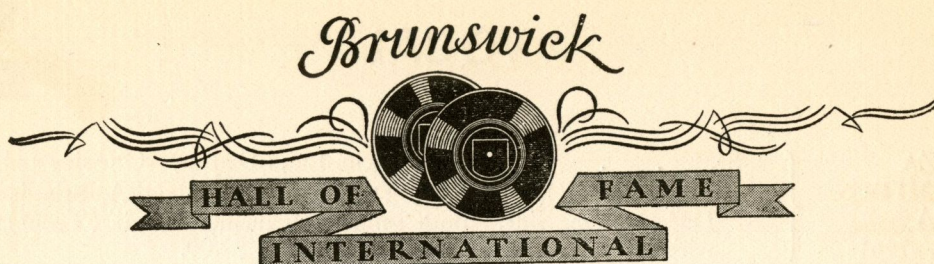
**ROMBERG
FRIML**
V-1478

Serenade (from "The Student Prince in Heidelberg"). (Donnelly-
Romberg.) One side and
L'Amour, Toujours, l'Amour. (Cushing-Friml.) One side. Both
sung by Richard Crooks with male chorus and orchestra.
One 10-inch disc. Price \$1.50.

**COOK
ROBINSON**
V-B3409
IMPORTED

Exhortation. (Cook.) One side and
Hail de Crown. (Arr. Robinson.) One side. Both sung by
Paul Robeson (Bass) with piano accompaniment by Lawrence
Brown. One 10-inch disc. Price \$1.25.

Throwing aside all restraint, Gigli launches enthusiastically into these two commonplace songs, which are similar to those of Tosti. The first, *If*, by Luigi Denza (1848-1922), is the more effective. Denza wrote over 500 songs to Italian, Neapolitan, English and French words. . . . Graveure's selections are not distinguished by any especial qualities, though they are sung with warmth and intelligence. Bryceson Treharne, the composer of *Corals*, was born in Wales in 1879. He made his home in New York in 1917. He has written over 200 songs, of which many have been published, and several operas. Graveure has specialized in Treharne's songs for many years. . . . Movie customers will find Crooks' rendition of these popular songs from musical comedies eminently to their taste. A male chorus supports the soloist in the *Serenade*, and there is a small accompanying orchestra. . . . It remains for Paul Robeson to contribute the most enjoyable vocal disc of the month. A biography of this extraordinary Negro singer and actor has just been published by his wife, and he recently added to his triumphs in London when he appeared in *Othello*, creating, according to reports, an unforgettable impression. *Exhortation*, written in the manner of a spiritual, and *Hail de Crown*, a spiritual arranged by Robinson, are among the most interesting songs Robeson has recorded. The reproduction enables the words to be understood without difficulty.



RELEASES FOR THE MONTH OF

SEPTEMBER

OPERA

Album
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BIZET—CARMEN (In French)
Opera in four acts, founded on a Novel of Prosper Merimee
by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halevy.
SOLOISTS AND CHORUS OF THE OPERA COMIQUE, PARIS
ORCHESTRE LAMOUREUX, Albert Wolff, Conductor

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90076 WAGNER—LOHENGRIN . . . Prelude to Act 1 (Parts 1 and 2)
THE STATE OPERA ORCHESTRA, BERLIN
Max Von Schillings, Conductor

Recorded in Europe
PRICE **\$1.50**

{90077 WAGNER—A FAUST OVERTURE Parts 1, 2 and 3
{90078 THE STATE OPERA ORCHESTRA, BERLIN—Oscar Fried, Conductor

Recorded in Europe
PRICE **\$3.00**
for both records

SCHUBERT-LISZT—HUNGARIAN MARCH C MINOR
THE OPERA ORCHESTRA, BERLIN-CHARLOTTENBURG
Alois Melichar, Conductor

INSTRUMENTAL

90079 SCARLATTI-TAUSIG—PASTORALE—CAPRICCIO
WEBER—PERPETUUM MOBILE (Perpetual Motion)
Piano Solo **ALEXANDER BRAILOWSKY**

Recorded in Europe
PRICE **\$1.50**

90080 BORODIN—QUARTET D MAJOR Third Movement (Parts 1 and 2)
(Notturmo)
GUARNERI STRING QUARTET (Karpilowsky, Stromfeld, Kroyt, Lutz)

Recorded in Europe
PRICE **\$1.50**

VOCAL

90081 WAGNER—THE FLYING DUTCHMAN . . . Versank ich jetzt in
wunderbares Traumen (How Wondrous Strange) (Act II) (Parts 1 and 2)
Duet with Orchestra Acc.—In German **ELISABETH OHMS**, Soprano
and **THEODOR SCHIDEL**, Baritone, Conducted by Julius Pruwer

Recorded in Europe
PRICE **\$1.50**

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VIOLIN



**FALLA
DOBROWEN**
B-50164

Spanish Dance. (Falla-arr. Kreisler.) One side and
Fairy Tale, Op. 16. (Dobrowen.) One side. Both played by
Max Rosen (Violin) with piano accompaniment by Richard
Wilens. One 12-inch disc. Price \$2.00.

**HEUBERGER
KREISLER**
V-1465

Midnight Bells (from the "Opera Ball"). (Heuberger.) One
side and
The Old Refrain. (Viennese Popular Song — Transcribed by
F. Kreisler.) One side. Both played by Fritz Kreisler (Violin)
with piano accompaniment by Michael Raucheisen.
One 10-inch disc. Price \$1.50.

PUGNANI
C-50235D

Largo Espressivo. One side and
Tempo di Minuetto. (Arr. Kreisler.) One side. Both played by
George Enesco (Violin) with piano accompaniment by Sanford
Schlussel. One 12-inch disc. Price \$1.25.

The *Spanish Dance*, from *La Vida Breve*, is already available in several orchestral versions (by the Philadelphia Orchestra in Victor Set M-46 and by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra on B-90032). As a violin piece, it is somewhat less effective, though Rosen's brilliant fiddling keeps it from getting dull. Is the composer of the *Fairy Tale* the Dobrowen who has already appeared on records as a conductor and who is to conduct the San Francisco Orchestra this year? The recording is clean-cut and sharp-edged. . . . On the Kreisler disc we have the combination of one of the greatest violinists of all time, impeccable recording—and *Midnight Bells*. A similar arrangement is to be found on the reverse side. . . . Enesco's two selections are immensely charming. There is an attractive dignity about Gaetano Pugnani's lovely melodies that prevents them from becoming maudlin. Pugnani (1731-1798) was born at Turin, Italy. He studied at Tartini's school at Padua and later became famous as a violinist. The flawless finish and grace of Enesco's playing is faithfully preserved on the disc.

BAND



**GOUNOD
SCHAR-
WENKA**
C-50240D

Queen of Sheba: March. (Gounod.) One side and
Polish Dance, Op. 3, No. 1. (Scharwenka.) One side. Both
played by British Broadcasting Company's Wireless Military
Band under the direction of B. Walton O'Donnell.
One 12-inch disc. Price \$1.25.

Gounod's showy march is played with the proper flourish. The *Polish Dance* is rather clumsy and labored. The recording in both instances is brilliant and full.

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VIOLONCELLO



BOCCHERINI
V-7258

Adagio in A Major. One side and
Allegro in A Major. One side. Both played by Pablo Casals
(Violoncello) with piano accompaniment by Blas-Net.
One 12-inch disc. Price \$2.00.

**GOLTER-
MANN**
PERGOLESE
C-2249D

Andante. (Goltermann.) One side and
Tre Giorni. (Pergolese.) One side. Both played by Felix
Salmond (Violoncello) with piano accompaniment by Harry
Kaufmann. One 10-inch disc. Price \$0.75.

Casals' choice of recording material in the past has not always been beyond criticism, but his selection of these two numbers was a sound and logical one. Boccherini's charming and simple pieces are well adapted for his 'cello. Luigi Boccherini was born in Lucca, Italy, in 1743, and died in Madrid, Spain, in 1805. He was an accomplished violoncellist and a gifted and prolific composer. A slow, meditative piece, the *Adagio* is played exquisitely. The *Allegro* is more sprightly. The accompanying pianist, as if completely over-awed by the presence of the great 'cellist, keeps modestly in the background and barely makes himself heard. . . . Salmond's numbers are sentimental and of slim merit. Georg Eduard Goltermann (1824-1898) was born in Hanover. He won considerable fame as a concert violoncellist, and a violoncello concerto and some other effective pieces for his instrument that he composed obtained popularity. Giovanni Battista Pergolese was born in Italy in 1710 and died in 1736. He wrote in practically all of the forms, and some of his music is genuinely beautiful. Salmond is ably assisted by Harry Kaufmann in his rendering of these pieces.



TUNES OF THE MOMENT

Under Vesuvian Skies by Henry Thies and His Orchestra
(Victor 22460). Price, \$0.75.

Swingin' In a Hammock by Guy Lombardo and His Royal
Canadians (Columbia 2237D). Price, \$0.75.

Steamboat Bill by Paul Tremaine and His Orchestra (Col-
umbia 2229D). Price, \$0.75.



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— three parts, Blaník—
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SCHRECKER—Der Schatzgraber—

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TSCHAIKOWSKY—Concerto in D Major,
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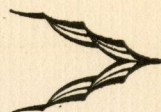
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CORRESPONDENCE



Conrad Ansoerge

Editor, *Disques*:

May I call your attention to an error on page 24 of the April issue of your splendid little publication. You state that Conrad Ansoerge's real name was Eduard Reinhold. I can understand why this error was made as several musical dictionaries place the name (Eduard Reinhold) after Conrad Ansoerge. At least one other musical periodical made the same assertion. It happens that my family in Germany have been very intimately acquainted with the Ansoerge family for years and I wrote to my father and he just replied that Mr. Ansoerge's full name was Eduard Reinhold Conrad Ansoerge.

It is very possible that Mr. Ansoerge may have used the name Eduard Reinhold occasionally but, of course, that was not his real name.

A. L.

Philadelphia, Pa.

Sibelius

Editor, *Disques*:

Why is it that the greatest living symphonist is so insultingly neglected by phonograph record makers? Why is it that only his *Finlandia* and *False Triste* are to be had? Is Sibelius himself opposed to mechanical reproduction? Why doesn't somebody itching to do something new make recordings of his 3rd and 4th symphonies, of his "En Saga," of his violin concerto and of his fine string quartet, "Voces Intimae"?

Sibelius is the most original composer of to-day—much too original for the banal conventionalities of the ultra-modern gas-bags—much too isolated a genius to appeal to the mob-minded, fashionable, boudoir-softened sentimentalists, sex-ridden and choked, insincere and superficial, in a retreat from reality at the mercy of realism. This is the reason—Sibelius is the most original composer of our day and therefore not fashionable. If there do happen to be records of his symphonies, I still repeat Sibelius is too big to be fashionable, for fashionable things are advertised and I have searched in vain for advertisements of Sibelius masterpieces.

Yours sincerely,

LAURENCE POWELL.

Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Editor's Note: The Finnish Government has arranged to contribute 50,000 marks towards the expense of a series of records of Sibelius' works. The first two symphonies will be recorded in the Columbia studios in England under the direction of Professor Kajanus, who was especially chosen by the composer.

An Error

Editor, *Disques*:

On page 132, June number, of your interesting magazine, I notice that you identify the author of "Plaisir d'amour" with Padre Martini.

In my opinion, this information is not accurate. In Lavignac's "La Musique et les Musiciens," page 522, I read:

"MARTINI (1741-1816), né a Freistadt (Palatinat) Musicien plein de grâce et de facilité, n'est plus guère connu que par deux opéras-comiques, 'Le droit du seigneur' et 'Annette et Lubin,' et surtout par une romance 'Plaisir d'amour,' dont le succès n'est pas encore épuisé, et qui restera un type de grâce.

"Son vrai nom était SCHWARTZEN-DORF.

"Il est assez curieux d'avoir un nom allemand, un pseudonyme italien, pour n'écrire que de charmante musique française. Il importe de ne pas le confondre avec le P. Martini, de Bologne, 1706, qui était un compositeur liturgique."

As it has been pointed out, the interest of record lovers has shifted from the artists to the composers. Every one interested in good music asks in the first place, Who composed it? Then he inquires about the opus number, and afterwards decides who is to play the composition for him. Such being the case, the logical thing to do would be to label the records in the order above mentioned, in the same manner that the Universal, Littolf, Peters musical editions are printed. Your magazine will be of great assistance to all music lovers in suggesting this.

Wishing a great success for *Disques*, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. PALOMAR.

Tampico, Mexico.

BOOKS

The Evolution of the Art of Music. By C. Hubert H. Parry. Edited with additional chapters by H. C. Colles. New York: D. Appleton and Company. Price, \$3.50.

If the English have been somewhat sparing in presenting the world with first-rate composers, they have been almost lavish in turning out music critics of sound merit and genuine originality. Such a critic was C. Hubert H. Parry, whose *The Evolution of the Art of Music* has just been reissued in a new edition edited by H. C. Colles, who also contributes three additional chapters. Parry's work, now a classic, was first published in 1893, and it constitutes, as Mr. Colles says, "one of the foundations of English musical literature." Parry was a man of thoroughly interesting ideas, and he knew how to get them into effective English. Every sentence actually says something, and there are no signs of those vague, indefinite and beautifully meaningless phrases with which most critics are in the convenient habit of filling out their work. Some of Parry's conclusions, pondered today, may seem debatable, but in the main they still hold good. Mr. Colles was the editor of the third edition of *Grove's* and the *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*; he is the present critic to the *London Times*. He has made no alterations in Parry's text, but now and then he adds a judicious footnote. His discussions are sane and provocative; they are worthy of being included in Parry's book, which is ample praise. Like most sensible modern critics, Mr. Colles notes with approval the increasingly important part the phonograph is taking in current musical affairs.

Johannes Brahms. By Richard Specht. Translated by Eric Blom. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. Price, \$6.00.

The author of this new volume on Brahms knew the composer well during the last ten years of his life and was encouraged by him to take up musical criticism. He therefore not only has the technical equipment necessary for such a work, but he has also the added advantage of having known his man at first hand. American readers will probably be interested principally in the biographical matter, which occupies the major portion of the work. Mr. Specht's treatment of Brahms' music is valuable and thorough, but his judgments are surprisingly different from those most people hold. One is astounded to read, for example, that: "The career of this work (the *C Minor Symphony*), which shows the

master at his sublimest and as the worthy successor of the great German composers, was a chequered one from the beginning. Even today it has won little more than awed admiration; it is neither affable nor pompous enough to awaken love in the hearer." One rubs one's eyes. Is it really only "awed admiration" on the part of the musical public that accounts for this symphony being one of the most frequently played in the repertoire today?

But when Mr. Specht tells us of Brahms himself, his manner of living, his relations with his friends, his methods of composition, his habits, his love affairs—when he discusses these things, he compels interest and attention. It is a singularly able and thoroughly engrossing portrait of one of the greatest products of the human race. Mr. Specht's treatment of such a delicate subject as Brahms' relations with Clara Schumann is wholly admirable. He allows himself none of the overconfident smirks now so popular among the biographers, nor does he evade the issue entirely, as has formerly been the custom. Instead, he gives an honest, straightforward, plausible account of the matter. Needless to say, neither Brahms nor Clara suffers from the process. The book is cordially recommended to all admirers of Johannes Brahms. It makes fascinating reading, and it belongs by that other admirable study of the composer, Walter Niemann's *Brahms*. There are sixteen illustrations, all of them interesting, and the translation by Eric Blom is an excellent piece of work.

Music and Romance for Youth: A Course of Study in Music Appreciation for use in Junior High Schools. By Hazel Gertrude Kinsella. Camden, New Jersey: R C A Victor Co., Inc. Price, \$2.25.

This intelligently prepared book is well-calculated to engage—and, still more important, to hold—the interest of Junior High School pupils, for whom it is intended. It makes the subject of music a live and absorbing study. All the dreary platitudes and tiresome, useless exercises formerly so popular with pedagogues are omitted, and in their places are substituted interesting explanations of music and composers with appropriate illustrations and pictures. An enormous amount of ground is covered, and there are lists of suitable books for library reading and Victor records.

